

WENONAH

Historical Society Newsletter



January 2001
Published by the
Historical Society
of Wenonah, NJ



Another woodcut from the turn-of-the-century Times.

JANUARY MEETING TOPICS

Happy New Year! We have a lot of exciting things happening for 2001, and this first meeting of the new millennium will be an important one for everyone who wishes to have a voice in the Society to attend.

For "entertainment and education" Rocco Doto will be presenting a slide presentation that he prepared for the historical preservation course he attended at Burlington County College. We may also have another surprise guest (which you will have to attend to find out who!) to participate in a question and answer session.

Many topics will be on the table for discussion, including ideas for future meetings, ideas for special Society events, and the formation of a few committees for various purposes (sorry for the vagueness...but we'd like to put these ideas to the membership at the meeting before making them public).

Also, I'm sure you've noticed that the newsletter has expanded by two pages for this issue. We hope you enjoy the new features, and if you have anything you'd like to submit, we'd be happy to publish it!

See you at the meeting.

WENONAH 100 YEARS AGO - JANUARY 1901

Compiled by Milton Webb

The birth of the new century was welcomed in here last night with a great deal of gusto and flourish. The churches were well-attended and deep spiritual feeling exhibited.

Our people are all happy in the beginning of the new century and there seems to be bright prospects about for all.

About 40 young people attended the masquerade ball at Noblitt's Hall. There was a watch night service at the Methodist Church.

Pastor Cobb has been presented with a handsome new watch and Mrs. Cobb was remembered with a handsome silk umbrella.

Icehouses are being filled here and we understand Dr. Stout, Will Stevenson, Frank Hendrickson and Turner and McCormick are among the number. (There were numerous icehouses in Wenonah including a large one at the Wenonah Inn and Joseph Warner's at the Wenonah Lake.)

George Sawyer is carrying a pretty severe cut

across his eye from being hit over the head with a lantern in the hands of the brakeman on the 6:40 southbound train. It is said the trouble arose over an altercation over Sawyer's ticket, which he refused to give up and the later was intoxicated.

The telephone exchange is to be located in Richard Clark's store where there is now a pay station. (This is now Mary Kaye hair dresser, 3 East Mantua Avenue.)

We understand parties are negotiating toward starting a laundry here in the near future. (This never happened however there was out of town laundry picked up and delivery for many years in town, White Star and Cascade being two of them.)

Mrs Hamilton Turner surprised her guests with a dinner of fish and oysters and the good things that go with them. The occasion was greatly enjoyed by the ladies. The merry laughter proving to the passer by that there were other good things beside the dinner.

The snow hangs on well.

As February nears the Rail Road men are experiencing a sort of dread for fear the blizzard of two years ago may be repeated.

It is reported that some of the scholars put red pepper in the heater at the school yesterday to shorten the session but their session is now somewhat extended.

Rudolph's big Camden bakery is delivering free samples of bread here today.

There is someone harboring my black and tan hound dog, Therefore I give notice that I will prosecute to the full extend of the law any person or persons in whose possession he is found. -W.H. Sithens

It is reported that a certain well-known contestant for fancy skating had to go to the doctors after a rather severe effort a day or so ago.

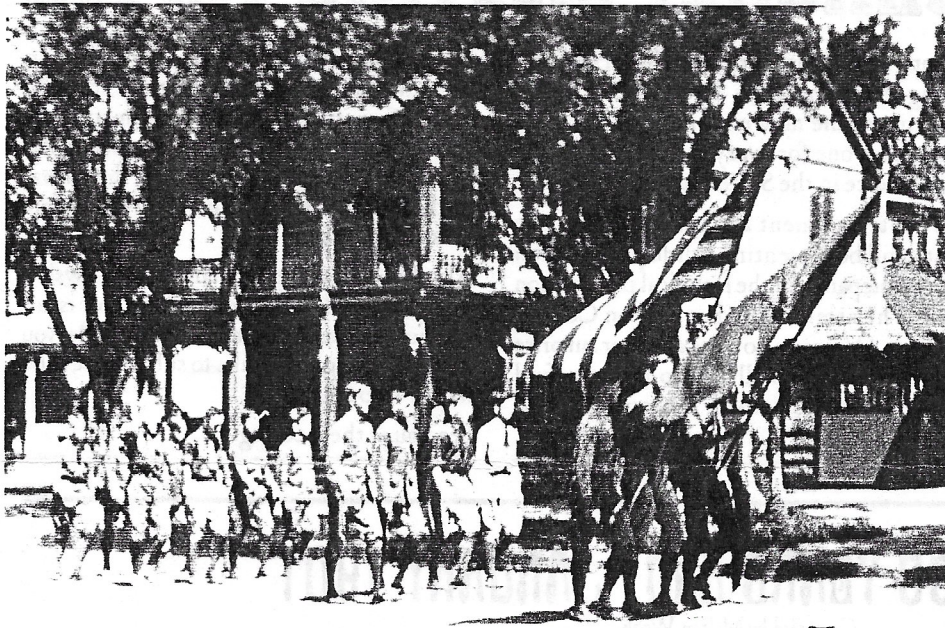
From the Woodbury Daily Times - Woodbury, New Jersey

THE HOWARD-WENTZELL BUILDING

7 West Mantua Avenue

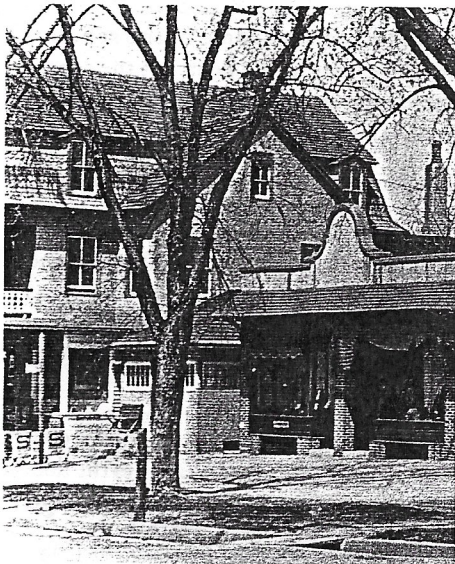
First in a series of articles detailing the histories of some of Wenonah's more notable structures. By Milton Webb

If one were asked what is the most historically significant building in Wenonah a likely candidate would be the Howard-Wentzell Building in the business district of our town. The old timers in Wenonah have known this for many years as the Wentzell apartment house. However there is much more to be told about this building than its role as an apartment house.



The Wentzell building with the 1914 Fourth of July parade passing in front of it...

...and another photo taken during its life as a store.



school years refers to the building as "Daddy Howard's school. History does not record why it was called thus.

In 1878, the newly formed YMCA moved into the third floor. The "Wenonah Advance" reported, "The YMCA is now fully organized and is a fact. The association has a cozy room in the Howard Building and has upon its tables magazines, newspapers, games for the profit and pleasure of its members and its primary object viz to provide a comfortable room for the improvement of the young men of Wenonah and vicinity. The room is open on Monday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings of every week." This use lasted until 1916 when they moved into what later became the Legion Hall on North Marion Avenue.

A new era evolved in the building when Walter and Elizabeth Wentzell opened a store on the first floor in 1910. Previous to this he was the local huckster who was noted for having a mule to pull his cart. His specialty was seafood, particularly oysters brought in by rail from Port Norris-Bivalve on the Delaware River. Upon opening, they advertised selling vegetables, fruits, pickles, fruitcakes, ice cream and oysters. As time went on they became a Purina feed dealer, the Inquirer news distributor and pumped Gulf Gas out front. They afforded home delivery to their customers for many years.

In 1913, they built an ice cream pavilion next door where Keller's insurance office is sited today. This was a favorite of the academy boys where they reportedly were allowed privileges not allowed elsewhere such as smoking. The pavilion was a great place to go not only for them but also for the people of Wenonah. This stood for many years until the Wenonah Food Market building was erected. Out front there was a cast iron horse-watering trough, which was the donation to the citizens of Wenonah by the local chapter of the Women's Christian Temperance Union.

The Wentzell heritage extended into later decades, when after the new store next door was built their daughters Francis and Jennie ran it as a food market. They later married becoming Fran Sweeney and Jane Bowker. Tony Sacca joined with Jane and her husband George later and opened up a meat department in the store. Jane and Francis' brother Earl, a graduate of the Wenonah Military Academy, became a doctor and was our local physician for many years until 1965. He was one of the primary founders of the Memorial Hospital in Woodbury.

Fortunately, Rocco and Colleen Doto, members of our Wenonah Historical Society, now own The Howard-Wentzell Building. Their love of our local history has been expressed in the efforts they have made to bring it back to its former appearance.

In December of 1872 the "Constitution", printed in Woodbury, stated "Mr. Ramson Howard is building a handsome three story store at Wenonah, the raising taking place Saturday last. The basement will be used for a restaurant while the third floor will be devoted to public purposes." This was an ambitious project considering the new village of Wenonah having less than two dozen houses was only a year old.

The Howard building was finally erected after a bad start when a twister destroyed the partially weather boarded unfinished structure, completely leveling it, a loss estimated at \$1,000. Completion was accomplished in the year 1873, a giant step forward for the vision of creating a new town along the tracks of the West Jersey Rail Road.

One of the first tenets was newly formed School District 54 of Wenonah who rented space for schooling. Previous to this, teaching took place in a private home (Dr. Garrison's), the rail road depot and a room set aside in the "Wenonah House". This space was used for two years, from 1876 until 1878 when a new permanent building was put up on North Marion Avenue. Many years later, Edward Farr in reminiscence of his early

COMMITTEE REPORTS

New to the Newsletter...

Each month this space will be reserved for reports from the various committees which are forming in the society. It can be a place to update the membership on what you have accomplished, on what you need volunteers for, or any other pertinent information you would like to share. To submit your reports, please either provide a disc to Curt Kapus (464-2485) with your file saved as a text or MS Word file, or just eMail it to wenonahhistoricalnews@home.com

We look forward to hearing about your progress.

Archiving and Preservation Committee

Attention all Members: Do you have memories of Wenonah's past that you think should be recorded for future generations? Are you interested in donating pictures, letters or other mementos that can be used for exhibits or for cataloging our town's history for others to enjoy? If you or someone you know is interested in preserving our past—Wenonah's past—please contact Rocco Doto, Chairperson for the Archiving Committee. Also, if you are interested in joining our newly formed committee please call Rocco at 415-1215.

1801

LIFE A CENTURY AGO

Reprinted from the January 3, 1901 issue of the Woodbury Daily Times.

One hundred years ago a man could not take a ride on a steamboat.
 He could not ride a bicycle.
 He could not send a telegram.
 He had never crossed an iron bridge.
 He had never taken a ride in an elevator.
 He had never heard of an automobile.
 He had never used anything but a wooden plough.
 He had never seen his wife using a sewing machine.
 He could not call in a stenographer and dictate a letter.
 He had never received a typewritten communication.
 He had never struck a match on his pants or anything else.
 He had never seen a McCormick reaper or a self-binding harvester.
 He could not go from Washington to New York in a few hours.
 He had never seen an electric light nor dreamed of an electric car.

He never looked (sic) pleasant before a photographer or had his picture taken.
 He had never heard of the germ theory nor worried over bacilli or bacteria.
 He couldn't take an anaesthetic and have his leg cut off (sic) without feeling it.
 He had never imagined such a thing as a typesetting machine or a typewriter.
 He couldn't talk through a telephone, and he had never heard of the hellogirl.
 He never heard a phonograph talk or saw a kenescope turn out a prize fight.
 He never saw though a Webster's Unabridged Dictionary with the aid of a Roentgen ray.
 He had never purchased a 10 cent magazine which would have been regarded as a miracle of art.
 He could not buy a paper for a cent and learn everything that had happened the day before all over the world.
 In short there were several things he could not do and several things he did not know.

WENONAH

Historical Society Membership Form • 2000-2001

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

eMail Address _____

Amount Paid \$ _____ Check # _____ Enclosed Cash Enclosed

Please bring this form with your payment to any meeting. Thank you!

Join today and enjoy the benefits of getting to really know your town!

Membership Benefits

- Monthly newsletter mailed to your home
- Monthly meetings with informative programs
- Access to various archives and memorabilia
- Network of knowledgeable historians
- Historical field trips

Cost: \$10 per family household per year



WENONAH Historical Society

Newsletter Committee
P.O. Box 32
Wenonah, NJ 08090-0032



Ralph & Rachel Knisell
100 W. Mantua Ave.
Wenonah, NJ 08090



WENONAH Historical Society

**Next Meeting will be held
Friday, January 12th, 2001 · 7:30pm
Wenonah Community Center**

Friends, Family, Children, and New Members Welcome!

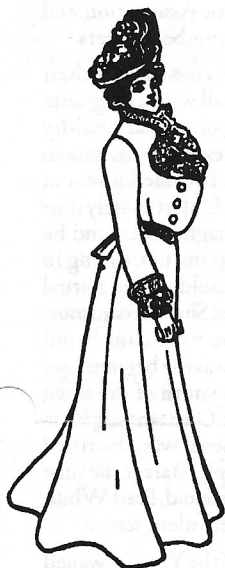
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WHAT FEBRUARY HOLDS...



Our program for February is another one which depends on your participation. We would like to make our February meeting about "the things you love." Since Valentine's Day is upon us, we thought this month would be a great time for you to share with the society one object that you love (other than your spouse!). So bring in that one treasure that sits at the center of your front parlour and tell us why it means so much to you. It doesn't necessarily have to be a Wenonah artifact, and the more unusual the better!

We will also be starting a new "feature" at our meetings: "Can You Identify It?" At the commencement of each meeting, we will present an object to you for identification. If you can guess its purpose... the payoff is big! You gain the admiration and adoration of your fellow Society members and the nickname "Know-it-All"

Our next newsletter will also be expanding, with regular columns on "Why I Moved to Wenonah", "Letter from the President," and "Letters." As part of our meetings and newsletters, we will gradually incorporate some of the ideas presented during our January meeting. We appreciate any help or contributions you can offer.

Thank you to Bill DeAscentiis for answering our questions about the new municipal building and Rocco Doto for his fine presentation in January!

The Mission of the Wenonah Historical Society

The objectives of this Society shall be:

1. To acquire and preserve historic documents, records, artifacts and memorabilia of the Borough of Wenonah.
2. To locate and acquire a suitable place for the storage and display of such materials.
3. To encourage the protection and preservation of historical landmarks and points of interest within the Borough of Wenonah.
4. To encourage historical and genealogical research, and publication of its results.
5. To encourage interest in history generally, and in Wenonah history in particular, among the youth of Wenonah.
6. To make all information and acquisitions of the Society available to the public.

WENONAH 100 YEARS AGO - FEBRUARY 1901

Compiled by Milton Webb

There is considerable complaint about the electric light service again.

Checkers have become a fad here again and several of our players would like to meet some who think they can play from other communities.

The first meeting of the tourist club was held at the home of Miss Edith Farr last evening. (The Farr's were great travelers with many frequent trips to Maine and later to Europe, particularly Switzerland.)

The small pox scare has reached this town in the past few days and has caused a number of the mothers to keep their children from attending school.

Charles E. Simpson is engaged in the Belgian hare business quite extensively. (This was on North Jefferson Avenue north of Buttonwood Street. He had over five thousand rabbits at one time. The Wenonah depot became the main debarkation

point for these animals in New Jersey. We were the rabbit capital of South Jersey!)

There was an interesting all day missions meeting at the Methodist Church yesterday.

There is complaint because of the ordinance prohibiting the dumping of ashes in the streets is not being enforced.

There is a prospect of renting several of our houses this spring. (This was the tail end of Wenonah being a summer resort. A hand full of houses was still unoccupied in the winter in anticipation of summer rental.)

Officer Drummer picked up a man about 3:00 o'clock this morning. The officer declared a man with good intentions would hardly be prowling about in the cold at that unseemly hour. He was locked up but nearly froze and so was released at daylight.

Good ice is making but most of people have their icehouses filled.

A missionary lunch was held at the home of Mrs. Charles Bilderback. (The site of this home later became the Wenonah Free Public Library.)

The grip epidemic seems to be abating.

Frank Hendrickson has his tomato and cabbage beds sown.

A bargain for sale because of want of use. An 8-year-old bay horse-kind, sound, and gentle-can road ten miles per hour-price \$50-credit of 3 months can be given-apply to Charles Fedser

One of Job Scott's grays is dangerously ill this morning. (These were draft horses used to pull the lumber and coal wagons from his Mantua lumberyard.)

From the Woodbury Daily Times - Woodbury, New Jersey

JOE NOBLIT'S HALL

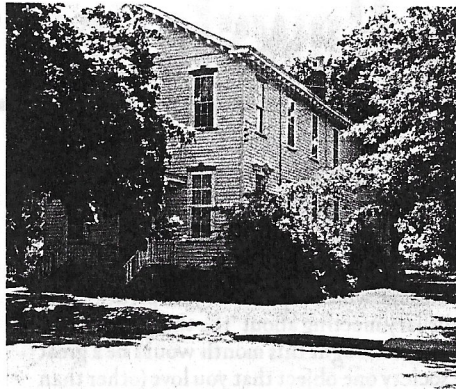
6 North Marion Avenue

Second in a series of articles detailing the histories of some of Wenonah's more notable structures. By Milton Webb

On March 19, 1878 in three public places in Wenonah the newly formed school district 54 posted the following notice: The annual Wenonah school meeting will be held in the school room in the Wenonah House on the Tuesday of the week following the town meeting at which meeting will be submitted the question of voting a tax to maintain a free public school, the amount thought to be three hundred dollars. The question of building a schoolhouse will also be considered with the matters related thereto. The amount thought to be necessary for this purpose is twentyfive hundred dollars. George Baily District Clerk. The meeting was a public forum where the question of building a schoolhouse was thoroughly talked over and a free expression of opinion given. It was agreed that the Board of Trustees be authorized to build a school not to cost over \$2500 exclusive of well, out buildings and fences. There was one vote in the negative. The Mantua Land and Improvement Company donated the land and Dr. Fithian purchased the entire bond issue.

The contract for the erection of the building was let out to Daniel Brown, a local builder and developer for \$2245.95. Other contracted items were to Sam Chew, digging a well \$15; Henry Frederick, well pump \$13.50; William Allen, bell and lightning rods \$9.00; Sam Dilks, carting \$3.00; Isaac Stevenson, grading and digging cellar hole \$38.00 and Ed Ward, plans and specifications \$30.50. The building was completed in the early months of 1879 and classes were immediately started in the new schoolhouse. This building, as a schoolhouse was to serve the community until 1894 when it was replaced by the "Stone School House" on North Clinton Avenue.

Several expenditures were significant during this period. Ella English to be employed as teacher at a salary not to exceed \$35 dollars a month. Sam Chew coal for the year \$37. May Clark to assist Tracy Waddington at a salary of \$1 a day.



The building in its role as the American Legion Hall in 1959.

During the period of use as a schoolhouse the trustees rented out the building for other purposes. The most significant was the Mantua Grange #39, Patrons of Husbandry. It might be noted that the Granger movement was a powerful political force and this chapter was large, numbering over two hundred members. Lectures were held and auctions of produce and grain held in the building. Also the tradition of this building as a polling place started lasting over one hundred years.

In June of 1894, the Trustees of the school district sold, at auction, the building to Joseph Noblit for \$1,500. He was a well-known citizen of the community. A farmer by trade, he also was the Deptford Township clerk. Wenonah still was a part of this township at this time. Known as "The Old War Horse," he was a veteran of the Civil War having served with the 138th Pennsylvania Volunteers. He was an active member of the Grand Army of the Republic, the Civil War veteran's organization.

Every up and coming community during this period had what was known as an "Opera House" and this building would fall into the category. On several occasions an advertisement would mention that an event would be held at Noblit's Opera House. He leased out the building for a number a varied social affairs. The Mantua Grange continued to use the hall as well as several political organizations. In 1899 the Wenonah Field Club was formed which was the forerunner of our modern Wenonah Athletic Association, and they used the building for a number of years.

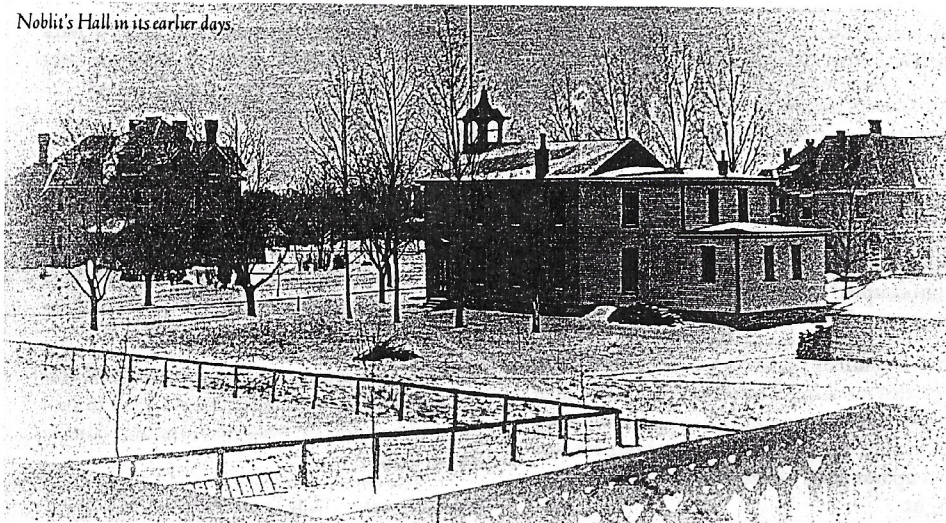
In 1913 The YMCA was reconstituted their organization and rented the hall with a long-term lease. They had the backing of several wealthy citizens who provided funds for extensive renovations to the building. It was then became known in Wenonah as the YMCA Hall. Unfortunately during this period Joe Noblit's sight failed and he moved to Oregon with his grandson, dying in 1915. The Y took title to the building and started a large undertaking of activities. Shuffleboard tournaments were held and there were dances and socials for the teenagers. This was the beginning of the ongoing concern for the youth of the town through providing recreation. Outstanding were the Saturday night movies when it was advertised seating capacity for 250 people. Stars at the time were Charles Chaplin, Mary Pickford, Pearl White, Buster Keaton and others of the silent screen.

Interest in the local chapter of the YMCA waned and the building went into disuse. Probably the greatest reason for this was the growing interest in the scouting movement under the leadership of Dr. Gage. In 1922, the newly organized J. Arthur Holeton Post 192, American Legion purchased the YMCA Hall. Previous to this they were meeting at what is now the Wild Iris floral shop, formerly the offices of the Wenonah Realty Company. Now the building became known as the "Legion Hall", the name lasting for over half a century. It became the center of social activity in the town. Saturday movies were started again for the children as well as teen-age dances, travel lectures, potluck dinners, strawberry festivals, band concerts and public forums. Voting was still held there. The American Legion Rifle and Pistol Club, the oldest NRA sponsored club in New Jersey build an indoor pistol range in the basement. In the second floor were recreational facilities including a fine old slate pool table.

In 1984 the Legion sold the building to a private owner after they began using the newly renovated train depot for their meetings, a new era emerged in the history of the hall.

Regardless of what you call it—Public School House, Grange Hall, YMCA Building, Legion Hall or my house—it is still a grand building. Basically it still retains its exterior architectural integrity and if treated kindly should exist another one hundred and thirty years.

Noblit's Hall in its earlier days



Feb 2001

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Archiving and Preservation Committee

We would like to present our mission statement for this newly formed committee:

Mission Statement

Committee for the identification, archiving, and preservation of Wenonah's historical treasures for future generations to enjoy. To identify all existing Wenonah Historical Society artifacts. To secure additional Historical treasures relevant to Wenonah's heritage and History.

The overriding goal is to prevent the destruction or damage of historical artifacts.

Currently the steering Committee for this new Committee is made up of Milton Webb, Diane Magarelli, Curt Kapus and Rocco Doto. The committee has had two additional volunteers and they are Larry Ledrick and John Mullens.

Our immediate goals are:

- Catalogue the existing inventory of W.H.S. documents and artifacts
- Identify Archival storage materials and conservation supplies
- Identify a temporary storage facility
- Identify a computer-based program that we can use for storing data about documents, photographs, and artifacts, and make the information available on a web page for all to enjoy.

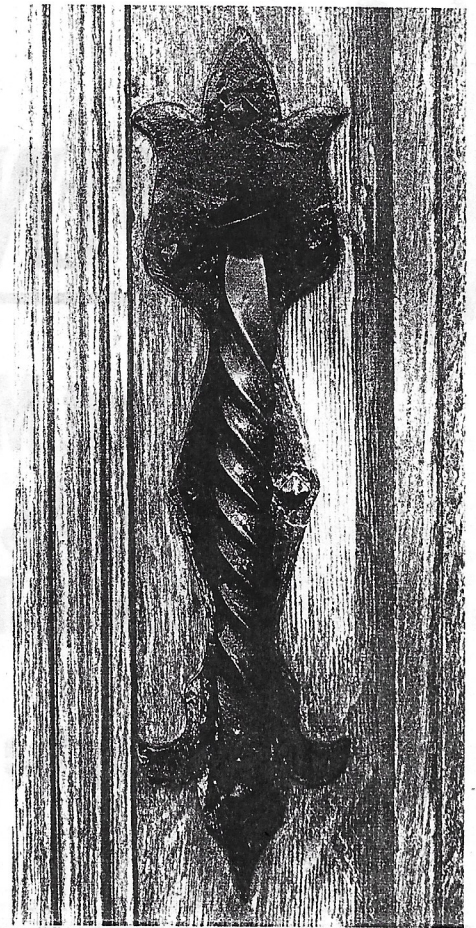
Our goals are ambitious and we will need everyone's cooperation. We encourage all to learn as much as possible about the history of our special town. If you have any ideas, suggestions, or articles to donate to the Historical Society please feel free to contact me.

Rocco F Doto · 415-1215 · rockracc@aol.com

To submit your committee's report:

- Provide a disc to Curt Kapus (464-2485) with your file saved as a text or MS Word file
- eMail your file to wenonahhistoricalnews@home.com

Your report must be received two weeks before our monthly meeting for inclusion in the newsletter.



WHERE IS IT?

Can you identify this building by this key piece of hardware? Each month we'll feature an architectural detail from one of Wenonah's structures for you to ponder. Don't worry...they'll get harder as we go along! If you haven't already figured it out, you can find out the answer at this month's meeting.

WENONAH LIBRARY

Remember to bring the thing you love to this month's meeting! See you there.

WENONAH

Historical Society Membership Form · 2000-2001

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

eMail Address _____

Amount Paid \$ _____ Check # _____ Enclosed Cash Enclosed

Please bring this form with your payment to any meeting. Thank you!

Return to Wenonah Historical Society · P.O. Box 32 · Wenonah, NJ 08090-0032

Membership Benefits

- Monthly newsletter mailed to your home
- Monthly meetings with informative programs
- Access to various archives and memorabilia
- Network of knowledgeable historians
- Historical field trips

Cost: \$10 per family household per year



WENONAH Historical Society

**Next Meeting will be held
Friday, February 9th, 2001 · 7:30pm
Wenonah Community Center**

Bring the Thing You Love to Our Meeting this Month!



06090-1829 06

Ralph & Rachel Knisell
100 West Mantua Ave.
Wenonah, NJ 08090



WENONAH
Historical Society
Newsletter Committee
PO. Box 32
Wenonah, NJ 08090-0032



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March 2001
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WENONAH 100 YEARS AGO · MARCH 1901

Compiled by Milton Webb

While at the B.F. Davis sale at Lambtown on Wednesday surveyor Cattell had a runaway as one front axle broke throwing the occupants out of the buggy and the horse continued on towards Almonesson where it was caught.

FOR SALE one bay pacer 15½ hands high 6 years old can show better than a 2:30 pace without training. Inquire Dr. Harry A. Stout (He lived and had his practice at 5 East Mantua Avenue)

The annual town meeting of the borough will be held Monday evening in Noblit's Hall where the yearly financial report will be on record and other business transacted as may come up before the meeting.

The Wednesday evening prayer meeting of the Presbyterian and Methodist churches will be combined this week to hear Miss Effie Braddock, a returned missionary who spent seven years in Indian. She is said to be a pleasing speaker.

A citizens meeting has been called to be held in Noble's Hall to nominate an assessor, 2 councilmen for three years, one for one year and a justice of the peace.

There was talk of having the school children vaccinated but the small pox scare is over and it might be delayed or forgotten.

Politicians are out with their war paint and it is said to be the hottest election we have had in some time.

There was general sorrow expressed here this morning over the death of ex-president Harrison.

Eggs are selling at 18 cents per dozen and may go lower.

Richard Clark went to the city today to lay in his stock of seed peas, onions etc. (Traditionally peas and onions were planted on Saint Patrick's Day.)

There was much interest manifest in school matters in our borough Tuesday evening. It was rumored

no women were to be placed on the board and this aroused the women of our town to action and the result was the highest vote ever cast at a school election. 70 were cast for Mrs. Annie Johnson, 65 for Eldora Hurff and 62 for Ed Farr. 23 of the ballots had written on them "no taxation without representation."

Several of our horse owners about town think they have some speed and don't have to take the dust of anyone. There seems to be one way to prove this, however driving separately even though the animals do make a record seems unsatisfactory. There must be a race. Sylvester Chew believes he has speed to burn while Hi Leap splits the air with his rig and John Holton says he takes no back seat. A course has been prepared on Mantua Avenue and about all it will take to get a meet some afternoon is for someone to name the hour and there will be several starters.

Bring out the dish pan—here comes the fish man with toothsome Delaware shad.

J. Vandergrif who has the bakery route is the prime favorite with all the boys as he sometimes has samples to pass out.

Both the residents of Mantua and Wenonah are again reviving the question of damming the Mantua Creek. Should this be done it is claimed we would have one of the finest lakes in South Jersey. (In 1885, William Allen, the engineer who laid out the streets of Wenonah created a plan to dam the creek. This was to be done at what we call today "Clay Hill" or the old West Jersey Rail Road trestle embankment. The lake created would have extended to an area near what is now Moore's Liquor store. This plan was again considered in 1901 and later on several occasions.)

From the Woodbury Daily Times · Woodbury, New Jersey

President's Letter

It has been a real inspiration to me to see such a great turn out for our meetings. I welcome all the familiar and the many new faces! It is a huge help to have so many volunteering to take on committees that are helping us to fulfill our mission statement. This is not an easy or a quick task. It takes the efforts of many and we still need lots of help...so, don't be shy...get involved! I want to take this opportunity in our first President's Letter to extend my gratitude to some of you who have been so instrumental in making this organization a success. A heartfelt thank you goes to:

- Jane Ramsay for her guidance and mentoring
- Milton Webb for his "100 Years Ago" letter that we have all been enjoying for so long... and for his newest column in the newsletter on our Historical Buildings and homes!
- To Jack Sheppard for keeping our mission statement foremost in our thoughts, for always taking on any task, and for his photography support
- Rocco Doto and staff for taking on the DAUNTING task of cataloguing Wenonah's archives! Please call if you have any help or archives to add!
- Curt Kapus for taking on the office of Vice President and presenting us with this wonderful newsletter...truly a great piece of historic journalism!
- Rachel Knisell for her dedication to keeping our Victorian Garden alive!
- And to all our officers' past and present who have set the solid groundwork from which we are able to go forward
- And finally, to all our members for it is your support that keeps our organization and this town's rich history alive!

I look forward to seeing you at the next meeting. Bring a friend and introduce them to the many benefits of the Historical Society.

It is the knowledge of our past that keeps Wenonah the historically rich town that it is... a place where people not only stay, but still call home after moving away!

-Vicki McCall, President

Upcoming Historical Events

March 10, 2001 · 9:15am to 2:30pm · Winter meeting of The League of Historical Societies of New Jersey, Mauricetown Methodist Church, Second and Noble Streets, Mauricetown, NJ.

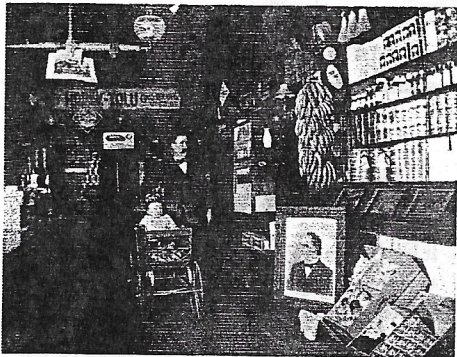
March 25, 2001 · 2:00-5:00pm · Gloucester County Historical Society presentation "Crazy About Quilts" in observance of Women's History Month. Gloucester County Historical Museum, 58 N Broad Street, Woodbury, NJ.

May 12, 2001 · 2001 Historic Preservation Awards Program, New Jersey State House in Trenton, NJ.

THE LITTLE HARDWARE STORE AROUND THE CORNER

3 East Mantua Avenue

Third in a series of articles detailing the histories of some of Wenonah's more notable structures. By Milton Webb



Interior of the Richard Clark General Store 1897. Herbert Clark is in the baby carriage. Picture is of William Jennings Bryan.

Lavander Bateman built the store building in 1884. Very little information on him is available other than he conducted a general grocery store on the premises. This was a short-lived enterprise as the store and property were deeded to Richard J. Clark in September of 1888.

The store was expanded with *honest goods and honest prices*. The stock consisted of dry and fancy goods, notions, furnishings, boots, hats, caps etc. During this period he was in competition with Turner and McCormick who had similar goods. He outlasted them and eight other competitors until 1912. He was quite active in the community serving on the town commission and various church boards. His sons Herbert and Jim were born in the house. Later Herbert would operate the coal yard business where the borough public works is today. Jim became a semiprofessional baseball player.

The newly formed People's Rural Telephone Company put their "central" in his store serving the thirty telephones within the town. Five years later when the Delaware and Atlantic Telephone Company wanted to house their exchange but he refused because they wouldn't provide an operator.

Richard Clark sold the business and the building to John Madara. He was a glass blower at Whitney Glass Works in Clayton. He continued the dry goods and grocery business successfully until 1920 when he sold it to a Norman Brown.

The business continued under his leadership until 1925 when it went up for public sale. The advertisement for the sale gives insight into the business. Listed was the store stock of shoes, hosiery, hardware, notions, dry goods, groceries, a meat cutter, refrigerator display, and everything to be found in a general store. This is one of the best residential and business properties in town located at the Wenonah station and across from the Military Academy Park.

Bill Seiders at this time had a hardware store in the northern part of the Grosscup building, being formerly owned by John Viereck. He was seeking

a new location. Milton Webb, a salesman for Winchester-Simmons Hardware Company, was persuaded by him to go into partnership in the 3 East Mantua Avenue building and to create a new hardware store. Mr. Webb, with the consent of his wife, also was talked into moving to town. They moved into the apartment next to what would become the hardware store. Soon after moving they were assessed \$500 for the concrete paving on Mantua Avenue that was their welcome to the town.

They called the store "The Little Hardware Store Around the Corner." The Winchester Simmons Company was the forerunner of our present True Value, Ace and other hardware chains. The stock was quite varied: sporting goods, tools, hardware cutlery, paints, and building materials. The barn in back was turned into a warehouse. The enterprise was quite successful despite the depression. However in 1935 the academy closed and this was a disaster to all the businesses in town and the area. The store closed in 1937.

The store was then leased to Mr. A.H. Williams who opened up a Fairlawn grocery store which was unsuccessful and closed in two years. After this Charlie Hill opened a hobby shop, which went out of business in 1940. The store was then turned into an apartment unit. During this period Mary Bilderback, formerly a piano teacher at the academy, taught music in the second floor. Many a child from Wenonah started their music careers with her.

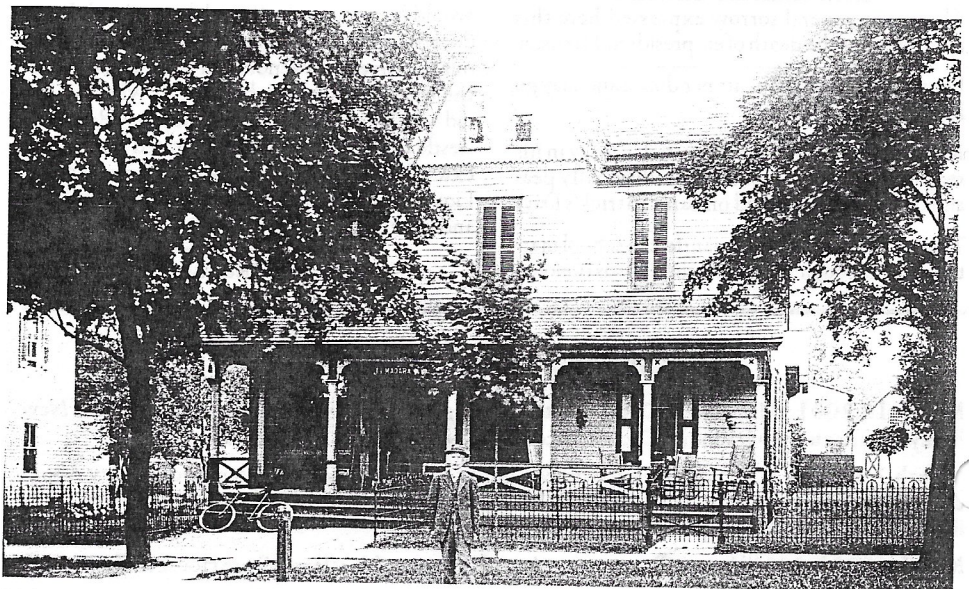
In 1949 Mr. Webb sold the building to Jim and Eleanor Ross. Eleanor's father was Charlie Hohlweg who owned Charlie's later called the Tall Pines. Jim

and Eleanor successfully created the Jim-El Sweet Shoppe, which was in business for fifteen years. This was basically a luncheonette and coffee shop serving breakfast and lunch. Many years later Eleanor after returning from Florida opened up a similar shop in Swedesboro under the same name.

After this it became Marge's luncheonette under the ownership of Margery and Bill Fox. This was an institution in Wenonah. In the morning for breakfast there was an influx of workers from Atlantic City Electric, Bell Telephone, and other locals. For lunch were those from Marmac and Newton Tool Works and the schoolteachers. It was a gathering place for the community, so many fond memories. Sadly Marjorie died but fortunately Bill Fox's sister Gladys Clark was able to take over the management of the store. Interesting is the fact that Gladys's husband was Herb Clark who was born in the building and whose father was Richard Clark the early owner.

The next owners were George and Jane Bowker who ran the business under the name of The Carriage Shoppe. They ran it for several years but Jane's ill health caused it to close. Several attempts were made to reopen, but were unsuccessful. Roy Duffield bought the building and did extensive renovations. In 1989 he leased the store part to Mary K Hair Design who have conducted an outstanding business there since that time.

The building over the years has been one of the focal points and historic centers of the town. Indeed its message is that it would be good to have a coffee shop again as we did years ago. This is something that is lacking in our community. For those who remember, we know.



Madara's General Store 1915. Iron fence in front. Porch was removed in 1925.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Archiving and Preservation Committee

The committee met on February 27th at the home of Milton Webb. The following items were discussed and agreed upon to be our main objectives:

1. Produce manual inventory list of all items recently acquired by the committee.
2. Prepare a receipt form to give to members handing over Wenonah Historical Society memorabilia.
3. Secure and prepare interim storage space at 9 West Mantua Avenue.
4. Identify purchase needs to submit to

Executive Board for approval.

5. Review Grant Program 2001 pamphlet from New Jersey Historical Commission for possible eligibility.

6. Arrange a meeting of the entire archiving committee.

7. Inventory the two lockers in the basement of the library.

8. Produce an inventory of all historical society artifacts

9. Identify any Historical Society artifacts not on the archiving committee list.

Our goals are ambitious and we will need everyone's cooperation. We encourage all to

learn as much as possible about the history of our special town. If you have any ideas, suggestions, or articles to donate to the Historical Society please feel free to contact me.

Rocco F Doto · 415-1215 · rockracc@aol.com

To submit your committee's report:

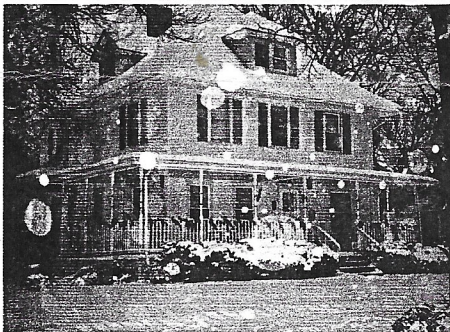
· Provide a disc to Curt Kapus (464-2485) with your file saved as a text or MS Word file

· eMail your file to wenonahhistorical-news@home.com

Your report must be received two weeks before our monthly meeting for inclusion in the newsletter.

WHY WE MOVED TO WENONAH

Featured Residents:
Jim, Mary, and Zachary Ready



We moved from Woodbury to Wenonah five years ago to live in a quieter and safer community. We knew that we wanted a "small town" environment in which to raise our family. Another draw to this town for us was the beauty and charm of the houses—every one was different and had a unique style. We also wanted to live within a town where the community cared and took pride in its town. You can see this by looking at our park, trails, and lake.

We found our house by accident. We were searching for the Wenonah Cemetery, made a wrong turn, and came upon this run-down house on 8 South Princeton. There was something about the house that drew us in—we knew we had to have it! After driving through the town we had confirmed our thoughts: "we were moving to Wenonah" and here we'll stay!

OUR TRIBUTE TO THE WENONAH LIONS CLUB

On April 21st of 1951 Charter Night was held for this local service organization. The group was made up of many outstanding citizens of the community many of which are no longer with us to name a few: Lew Hambrecht, Dave Knight, Norm Sanger, Bill Buckley, Howard Blithe, Charlie Hornberg, Tony Sacca, and Ted Worthington. Since then their work and outreach to the community has been outstanding. Foremost is the time and effort they put into organizing our annual, traditional Fourth of July. They have contributed equipment to our local fire company, aiding people in time of need and did much toward the restoration of our historic gem, the Wenonah Community Center. This is our opportunity on their fiftieth anniversary to say thank you for so much.

WENONAH

Historical Society Membership Form · 2000-2001

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

eMail Address _____

Amount Paid \$ _____ Check # _____ Enclosed Cash Enclosed

Please bring this form with your payment to any meeting. Thank you!

Return to Wenonah Historical Society · P.O. Box 32 · Wenonah, NJ 08090-0032

Membership Benefits

- Monthly newsletter mailed to your home
- Monthly meetings with informative programs
- Access to various archives and memorabilia
- Network of knowledgeable historians
- Historical field trips

Cost: \$10 per family household per year

March 2001

THE 4TH OF JULYS OF WENONAH'S PAST

Next Meeting will be held Friday, March 9th, 2001 · 7:30pm
Wenonah Community Center



Our March meeting will feature a slide presentation of the Fourth of Julys of Wenonah's past. John Mullens is organizing the slides graciously donated by Marjorie Lentz at last month's meeting. Come point yourself out in the parades! There are many shots of old automobiles, homes in their former lives, and some of our town's long-time residents in their junior days.

Please leave your evening free for an interesting program and come ready to have a good and entertaining time!

INFORMATION WANTED!

· Does anyone have information on what the round stone structure is behind the McCall/Braun/Farr house located in the woods behind the house?

· Curt Kapus is looking for information about or photographs of his home's interior and exterior at 11 West Mantua Avenue. Anything you can provide will be appreciated!

The Mission of the Wenonah Historical Society

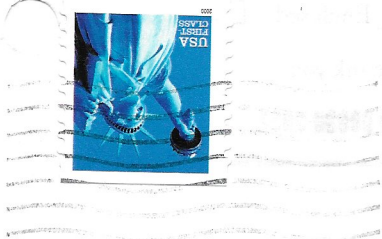
The objectives of this Society shall be:

1. To acquire and preserve historic documents, records, artifacts and memorabilia of the Borough of Wenonah.
2. To locate and acquire a suitable place for the storage and display of such materials.
3. To encourage the protection and preservation of historical landmarks and points of interest within the Borough of Wenonah.
4. To encourage historical and genealogical research, and publication of its results.
5. To encourage interest in history generally, and in Wenonah history in particular, among the youth of Wenonah.
6. To make all information and acquisitions of the Society available to the public.

Ralph & Rachel Knisell
100 West Mantua Ave.
Wenonah, NJ 08090

Wenonah, NJ 08090-0032
PO Box 32
Newsletter Committee

WENONAH
Historical Society



WENONAH

Historical Society Newsletter



Published by the
Historical Society
of Wenonah, NJ

PRESIDENT' S LETTER

As we head into spring, this is a great time to walk our historic streets and really take notice of the beautiful architecture in our town. Many of our own members have been working diligently (and I'm sure the task seems UNENDING) to restore their homes to the charm of another century. Their efforts have not gone unappreciated! Our small town is a truly an example of historic integrity. Our Goal as Historic Society members is to keep striving in our efforts to keep it that way!

As members of the Wenonah Historical Society, we are all proud of our heritage and we value the things that reflect this community's history. It has come to my attention that as citizens, there are tools available to us to help us in our efforts to preserve the historical significance of our town. One of these tools is a Section 106 review, which is a law that can be utilized to influence Federal decisions. By law, we are entitled to a voice when Federal actions will affect properties or districts that qualify for the National Registrar of Historic Places.

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) was established by Congress to preserve historical foundations of the Nation as a part of community life. Section 106 of NHPA requires Federal Agencies or Agents licensed under Federal Regulations to consider the effect of their actions or undertakings on historic properties. Part of the section 106 process involves identifying and consulting with interested public parties prior to implementation of any Federal undertaking. This section gives us a voice in determining how Federal projects may effect our town!

In speaking with the State of New Jersey Historic Preservation Office it was determined that our town, while not registered as a Historic District, is RECOGNIZED as a Historic District. This is important on many levels. As to current undertakings in our town, as many are aware, there is an approved site for a cell tower on our water tower in Wenonah. This application by AT & T, a Federally licensed company that would be required to follow the Section 106 guidelines, was approved at State of New Jersey Historic Preservation Office based upon AT & T's representation under Section 106 that there would not be an adverse effect on the town. The Historic Society was not consulted by AT & T on that site or on that undertaking, and accordingly, there remains a question as to the due diligence followed under Section 106. There is another application coming before Planning Board to approve an alternate site for a Cell Tower. The Agency requesting this approval (AT & T) is required under the National Historic Preservation Act to initiate a Section 106 process. This should entail AT&T identifying the Historical Society as an interested party and consulting with us on this matter. This affords us the opportunity to discuss and determine whether we feel that a cell tower at this site or any site requested will be an adverse effect on this historic community.

The State of New Jersey Historic Preservation Office recognizes that wireless communication towers can have adverse effects on the view sheds of historic districts, sites, and landscapes. Knowledge about the New Jersey State Register Review and the Section 106 review and the Telecommunications Act is critical to understanding the regulation behind the placement of these towers.

This process is an important means of giving us the right and opportunity to give input on maintaining the Historic integrity of this town. We as members need to be aware of this and to speak up on our behalf to responsible parties that we do wish to have a voice and be considered in any Federal undertaking, whether it be a telecommunications issue, or how federal money will be used on any projects within our town.

I will have available at the meeting information on The National Historic Preservation Act section 106 Review. Please take a moment to read it and bring comments and suggestions to our meeting. I will be unable to attend the April meeting but am available to any who wish to call me on this matter.

Information about these regulations can be found at www.achp.gov/regs.html.

WENONAH 100 YEARS AGO-APRIL 1901

Misses Florence and Anna Greenig are ill with quinsy.

Palmer Finch is now employed at the Blasius Piano Works in Woodbury.

A large stock of Easter hams and fresh jersey eggs and all other necessities will be found at Turner and McCormick. (Corner of West Mantua and South West Avenue)

Irwin Middleton was remembered with a large box of rockfish from a friend in Port Norris.

The topographical work on the new cemetery is nearly complete and the landscape work will soon commence.

Our people are pleased with the new platform at the train depot.

George Greenig and Howard Holt caught 45 sunfish in the Mantua Creek yesterday.

Pretty lawns are all ready in evidence here.

A number of children are out of school with the chicken pox.

It is confidently asserted that we are going to have a dramatic association organized here in a short time.

The pleasant weather no doubt will have a tendency to fill out churches tomorrow. It is thought in proportion this town has actually the largest attendance in churches on Sunday of any other place in this part of the state.

The funeral of Isaac Stevenson will be held Thursday morning, internment at Blackwoodtown. He was an elder in the Presbyterian Church. At one time he was the owner of nearly all of the land that is now Wenonah. It is reported he is nearly a millionaire.

Edward L. Farr is on an extended trip through the west.

Dominee Cobb is enjoying his new wheel in this fine weather.

Woodbury Daily Times

Woodbury, New Jersey

Milton webb

THE FIRE HOUSE

In the beginning fire protection was very sporadic. Efforts to create a hose company started in 1888 and indeed were partially successful with the acquisition of a hose cart and organized manpower. Storage of the hose cart was in the barn of the Wenonah House, later moved to Thomas Synnott's icehouse on East Mantua Avenue. Two more carts were acquired and the need became apparent that a centralized location of equipment was needed. In 1902 this was expressed in the Woodbury Times-*the fireman again are agitating the removal of the fire station to a more central location somewhere near the depot would be most preferable*. At this time the fire company consisted of 22 members, three hose carts, 1000 feet of hose, axes, lanterns, ladders and fire buckets.

A building committee was formed consisting of George L. Dilks, Hon. William C. Cattell and Joseph Truncer. These men, held in great respect in the community, gave momentum to the realization that the town would have a fire station. Several sites were considered and the Harris Estate lot on South West and West Cherry Streets was purchased for \$150. Bids were solicited for a two story concrete block building, the low bidder being Daniel Brown. He was President of the fire company and the largest builder of dwellings in Wenonah. His bid was \$1475. Additional costs were \$60 for paving and \$39 for grading. It is interesting to note the architectural style was very basic, the same replicated in Mantua, Mount Royal and Clarksboro. The structure was to be *nicely heated* and illuminated with electricity and gas. On January 24th 1909 there was a housing of the apparatus. *The members of the borough council were present to witness the event*. At this time there was no motorized equipment. The fire bell was moved to the new building from McCormick and Turner's store on Mantua and South West Avenue. Out front, a gas lamp with a glass sign marked Wenonah Fire Co. was installed.

There was much discussion about the uses of the second floor. It was agreed that it could be used as a smoking room and to play cards but, of course, there would be no gambling. Dick Ballinger who lived across the street in the Stone Farm House provided furniture. A slate topped pool table was installed. Borough council who had previously met in the offices of the Wenonah Realty Company started meeting there as well as the Gloucester County Poultry Association. When the Wenonah Building and Loan was formed this was their regular meeting place. The new fire station became the town hall as well as the barn for housing the equipment.

The first piece of motorize equipment housed in the barn ~~was~~ a 1915 Model C Auto Fire Truck. It was a dual-purpose vehicle as it was used to tow the hose cart and in the case of large fires the ladder wagon, which was, previously horse drawn. The second truck to be housed was a 500-gallon pumper and hose car made by the Stutz Fire Engine Company. This was at the time the ultimate pumper and it was commented in the paper that *they (the fireman) all think we have the best lot of councilmen in the state*. The cost was \$9,500 a considerable amount of money for the period. In 1928 a Seagraves pumper was purchased to replace the 1915 Ford. The cost was \$6,000.

Housing of the new pumper created a problem and it was determined to build an addition on the back of the barn. The addition was made of concrete block one story high. Part of the addition was a vault to store borough records, a new heating boiler and a jail. The jail replaced the one in the barn at 1 East Mantua Avenue. In order to finance the new addition carnivals were held in the park starting in 1921. This did not set too well with some of the citizens. One such person was Rev. Elbert M. Conover who was quoted in the Woodbury Times-

The writer has just learned with surprise and disappointment that gambling devises, chance selling etc are to be used at the Wenonah Fireman's Carnival. We had thought that the members of the Wenonah Fire Company and Women's Auxiliary were upholders of the law, order and decency. Evidently such members are in the silent minority. Is Wenonah so poverty stricken that we must resort to such low-grade methods of securing fire protection? Wenonah has gotten along without such degrading projects and should continue to do so. As much as the zeal of the workers for the carnival is to be recommended their effort is badly misdirected and entirely unnecessary. Wenonah has gotten along without such degrading projects and can continue to do so.

To which the Ladies Auxiliary of the Wenonah Fire Company replied to him in the same newspaper-

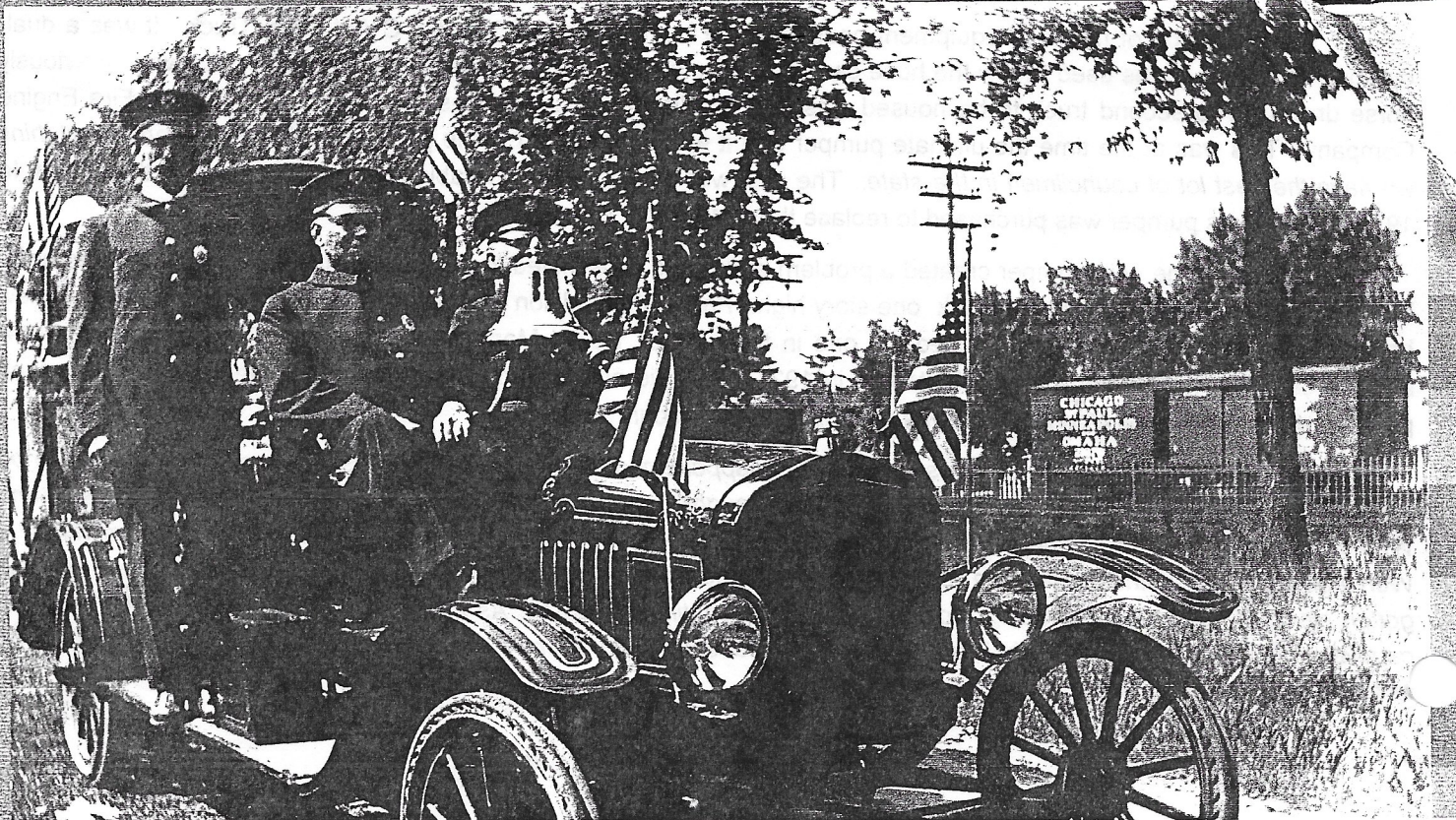
We are free to admit that we lack his evident knowledge of "rowdyism", "roughneck affairs" and "leg shows". Traveling about from place to place has its advantages for good or evil, of course, and if one seeks baseness and roguery he can easily find it. We stay-at-homes in this sleepy hamlet of Wenonah having little opportunity of learning the trickery of the outside world are content to jog along, getting a little mild amusement here and there, believe the best of our fellow man and keep in mind the old adage-Evil to him who evil thinks. . Mr. Conover asks that Wenonah wake up. We think that is a good idea also. Let it wake up to the fact that we have some red blooded men and women in our midst who scorn the saintly contenance and nasty mind. Their respectability is beyond question and they will not tolerate the language of the red light district. He must realize he is not addressing a gutter gang.

The town was polarized on this issue as it would in many other issues in the future. Public discussion and concern has always been one of the beautiful benchmarks of our community. The firemen's carnival was successful as a fundraiser and was held for annually in the park. It became one of the casualties of the Second World War and never revived afterward.

To be continued next month

The new fire house, picture taken in 1909

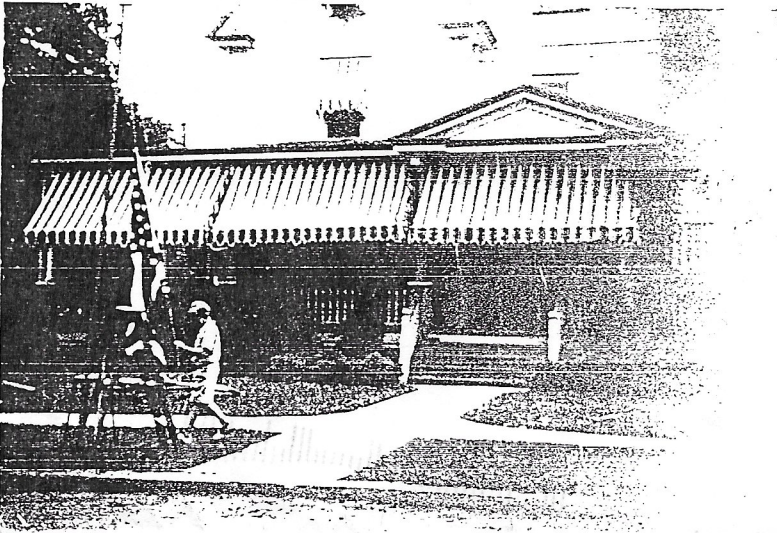
1915 Model C auto fire truck in service until 1928



John Viereck

DO YOU REMEMBER?

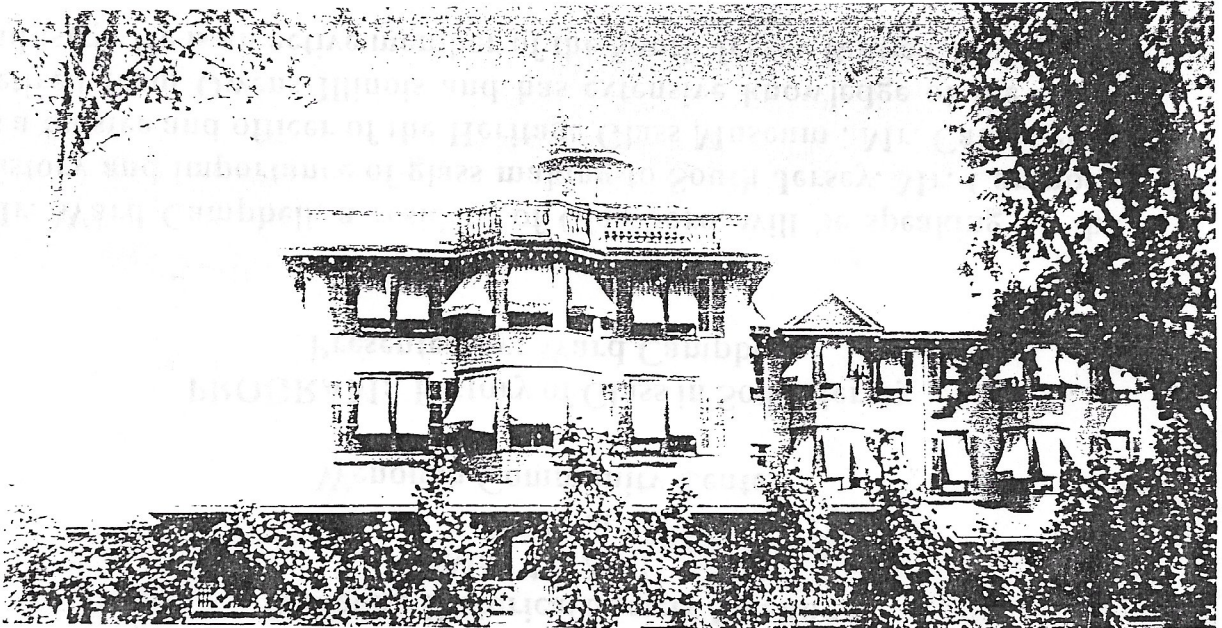
In the late spring workmen arrived in Wenonah to put up the awnings which had been stored for the winter on the houses of Wenonah. This was a big occasion. The whole appearance of the house changed with the new additional coloration. It was a welcome sign that summer was coming. Sitting on the porch was enhanced by the shade afforded by the awnings. It added a certain comfort to the house and served as a canopy to the entry area. In the fall the process was reversed and we knew that winter was on its way. Wouldn't it be grand if this tradition came back?



Typical configuration of awnings.

-101 South Marion Avenue C1930

The Wenonah Inn C.1890 In the Victorian period there was large use of awnings



Wenonah Historical Society Meeting
May 11, 2001
7:30 pm
Wenonah Community Center

PROGRAM: History of Glass in South Jersey
Presented by: Ward Campbell

Mr. Ward Campbell, a resident of Glassboro, will be speaking on the history and importance of glass making to South Jersey. Mr. Campbell is a trustee and officer of the Heritage Glass Museum . Mr. Campbell is retired from Owens Illinois and has extensive knowledge of the Glass industry. He is an active member of the South Jersey Bottle Club.

Please join us for an informative and hands on evening. Feel free to bring in any bottles that you would like Mr. Campbell to comment upon.

Ralph & Rachel Knissell
100 W. Mantua Ave.
Wenonah, NJ 08090



WENONAH
Historical Society
Newsletter Committee
P.O. Box 32
Wenonah, NJ 08090-0032



WENONAH

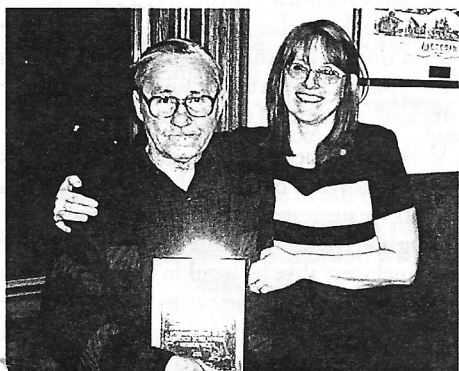
Historical Society Newsletter



August 2001
Published by the
Historical Society
of Wenonah, NJ

THOUGHTS ON THE PASSING OF MILTON H. WEBB, JR.

By Jack C. Sheppard, Sr.



Milton receiving the Society's Millenium Award from President Vicki McCall at the March meeting.

Since there are many people on the Wenonah Historical Society mailing list who are not from this area, a copy of the *Gloucester County Times* obituary for our friend Milton H. Webb, Jr., is enclosed.

Although the obituary is very much complete and factual, to some extent it fails to convey the full relationship that Milt had with his region and his community.

Although I was a classmate of Milt's sister Marjorie, Woodbury High Class of 1944, I didn't come to know Milt until Helen and I moved into Wenonah in the early 1950's and I was elected to Wenonah Borough Council.

Milt was extremely interested in the flora and fauna of Wenonah and encouraged Planning Board members George Eldredge, Nat White, and others to acquire parts of bordering woodlands using funds made available through the estate of Woodbury resident and naturalist Frank H. Stewart.

Once lands were acquired Milt was appointed to the Wenonah Woodlands Council, which at his urging became the Wenonah Environmental Commission. Milt was it's first chairman and a member for over twenty-five years.

Milt's knowledge of the origins and history of Wenonah was legendary. He spent countless hours in Wenonah and at the County Historical Society library researching and photocopying information related to Wenonah from the old newspaper records of the *Gloucester County Constitution*, *Democrat* and the *Woodbury Daily Times*.

Anyone researching Wenonah history or simply curious would stop by Milt's family home on South Marion Avenue and almost instantly Milt would produce one or more articles or photos on a particular point of interest.

My own personal relationship with Milt and his family was a great source of satisfaction to me. Many visits to Milt and his mother before her passing were very enjoyable as well as educational.

For those who haven't heard this story before, I was passing the house on my bike one day and saw Mrs. Webb, then in her eighties, on her hands and knees under the shrubs in front of the house. I stopped and asked if I could help her and that was my first experience with "Martha", the just acquired family kitten. Since that time Milton and Martha and I have spent many hours on Milt's porch, Milt and I talking about Wenonah and Martha attempting to gnaw through my shoe. Milt would just roll his eyes and tell me another tale about Martha's latest conquest, usually a chipmunk, squirrel or bird that Martha had dragged to, or into the house.

Milt's overwhelming interest in resisting change to the Wenonah he so fervently loved caused him to call me for discussion and advice many, many times.

He had spent a great many hours as part of the volunteers restoring the former train station and he hated to see it not being properly maintained or being altered in some way that was inconsistent with it's origins.

As development growth occurred in town he spent many hours perusing the plans and making constructive suggestions to the Planning Board and Borough Council.

He loved Wenonah absolutely and without concession.

I said at an ash scattering ceremony in the Wenonah woods that "heaven" is different things to different people and not necessarily just a wonderful place "up there". Some folks believe we can spend eternity in a place that was heaven to us while we were on earth. If this is possible then Milt is now a resident of Wenonah back at the turn of the previous century and will spend eternity roaming the streets of his favorite place in the universe, Wenonah.

We will all miss Milton H. Webb Jr. and I am sure I speak for all members of the Wenonah Historical Society in saying we extend our deepest sympathies and condolences to his family.

The Executive Board and membership would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank all of those who have so graciously contributed money to the Wenonah Historical Society. Your thoughtful donations will continue to enable us to preserve and promote the wonderful history and priceless artifacts of our town through projects such as this newsletter, the Archiving and Preservation Committee, and future endeavors. Again...

Thank You!!!

President's Letter

It is with a heavy heart that I write this letter. As most of you are aware, we lost a very dear member this summer. We are all deeply saddened by the loss of Milton H. Webb. We sent our condolences to his family and to his numerous friends. We will miss him terribly.

As we go forward into this new year, I hope you will take a moment to think about the amount of time and effort that Milton so freely gave to our Historical Society. There are not many places in this town that you can go and not be reminded of Milton. He touched so many of our hearts and it was his tireless efforts to keep this town true to its roots that have made Wenonah what it is today. In that spirit we must continue these efforts to keep the historical integrity of our town that Milton fought so hard to keep.

Take a close look around you ... at your own home and those surrounding it ... at the beautiful woods and nature trails that surround this town. Wenonah truly represents one of the few towns that can still boast a sense of community, a spirit of camaraderie, and a commitment to the town and its people. Let us never lose sight of that and let us renew our own promises to enrich this town.

In Milton's honor and in the honor of all our members who have passed that have shown such a commitment to this town (Jean Ehlers, Dorothy Fiege, and the many others) please, please, please volunteer your time and commit to continuing the efforts of those before us.

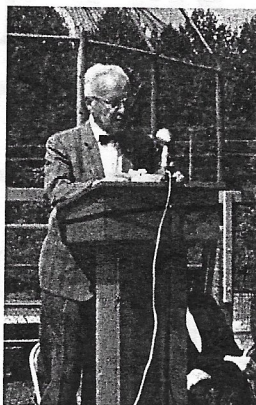
Join us at the annual Porch Party at Littlegrange on September 14, 2001 at 7:00 p.m. Bring a friend and hopefully you will come prepared to help us in our efforts to immortalize and honor this town.

As part of the evening's events, I would love it if you could bring a written story about how Milton Webb may have touched your life so that we can put his story forever in our archives as he put Wenonah forever in his heart.

-Vicki McCall, President

History of the Athletic Field

By W. George Gehring (July 4, 1969) [Edited for space considerations]



W. George Gehring giving this speech at Langston Field, 1969.

Langston Field was originally the Wenonah Military Academy Athletic Field. The Academy was located in the block bounded by Mantua Avenue, South Clinton, East Cherry, and South Marion Avenue. The stone wall in front of the home of a former teacher at the Academy, Captain David Knight, on South Clinton is the original wall of the Academy grounds and thereon is a plaque marking the site. Langston Field is where the cadets played football and baseball, held track meets and military maneuvers, and practiced horsemanship. It had an enclosed grandstand. The Academy was founded in 1905 and lasted until 1935. Old-timers will recall that a baseball pitcher by the name of Herb Pennock attended here and went on to become a star in the Major League, pitching winning ball for 23 years and making the Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, NY. Another famous graduate was State Senator Frank Farley.

After the Academy closed its doors in the famous depression of the 1930s, the Wenonah Athletic Association played ball there and many were the battles with Woodbury, Paulsboro, Pitman, and Glassboro. A few remaining residents of Wenonah performed on that team. In the 1940s and 50s, the Wenonah Boys' Club was organized by Bill Queale and myself. Our best pitcher was Gordon Scargle, who was signed by the St. Louis Cardinals.

In the early 1950s, the Lions Club International came to Wenonah and what a lucky day for us. One of the finest deeds they offered to do was to take on the responsibilities of the athletic field and the organization of the various teams. We now have an immaculate diamond, replete with well constructed backstop, dugouts, grandstand, a refreshment house with water and electricity, and also a basketball court. Three years ago [1966] the Lions Club sponsored the formation of the Wenonah Athletic Association which is now operating baseball under the capable guidance of many men and women of the Borough.

Now, let us go back 21 years and I'll acquaint you with a most unusual incident that took place in June of 1948. We were playing ball when a bulldozer came on the field and began digging a hole right through the cinder track in left field. We ran out and asked the man what was going on. He told us that the ball field had been purchased and was to be sold into building lots. Mrs. Samuel Langston heard of this and within a month's time convinced the new owner to sell her all but a half-acre in the outfield. She did this to save it for the girls and boys of Wenonah. A little over a year later she sold it to the Borough of Wenonah for a thousand dollars less than she paid for it. So it is now public property because of the generosity and foresight of this great woman.

When Bill Queale and I went around to thank her in 1948 on behalf of the Wenonah Boys Club, we suggested that the field be named the Langston Memorial Athletic Field. She said if Samuel were alive he wouldn't agree to it. This is the kind of people they were. I remember during the formation of the Wenonah Playground Association around 1940 that most of the large equipment was purchased by the Langstons.

On September 30, 1967, Mrs. Langston departed from this mortal life of nearly 87 years of fruitful living. Immediately we began a movement to perpetuate the memory of this great benefactor of Wenonah with a fitting memorial. The Lions Club was very happy to do this and now our dreams have come true.

Truly our community is enhanced as a nicer place to live by her deeds. This town has been blessed with a great spirit of patriotism and local pride and we aim to safeguard it by instilling such a spirit in our youth. They take over when we are gone. The finest example of such a spirit during my 40 years in Wenonah was accomplished in 1948 by your friend and mine, Jessica Wood Langston.



Letters to the Editor

Please see below right for where to send your letters. Thank you!

Dear Editor,

It has been a great pleasure to receive the Wenonah Historical News. My husband and I thoroughly enjoy reading the news that brings back a flood of memories.

We have lived in Florida for forty-one years this coming New Years' Day. I was forty years old when we arrived and my husband was forty-three, so you can imagine the expanse of time that has slipped by since living up North.

My family moved to Wenonah when I was two years old, and I can recall the day of arrival, Momma and Papa with their five children. Needless to say, we had a wonderful up-bringing in the small town of Wenonah. For my own experiences, I recall living in many different homes, with the exception of our one home on S. Monroe Ave. and Willow St. My parents built this and the one next door and we lived there until the homes were lost due to the great depression of those days. We moved to Woodbury for a short span of time, but soon returned to Wenonah and lived there until the day I was married and moved elsewhere only to return to Wenonah for approximately three or four more years with our two young children. After this, we had to leave my beloved town so that my husband could locate closer to his place of work.

During all the years of my absence from Wenonah, my memories of my home town dwelled on thoughts of my young years. There was never a lack of things to do, for in those days,

we had the wooded areas to play in, and very often, all of us kids when living on S. Monroe Ave., would have a great time climbing down the trunk of a big old tree on the Mantua Creek which was on S. Jefferson Ave, at the Cann's residence. At that time, there were other woods where we would pick Violets from the great expanse of tiny flowers peeping up at us near the swamps on the north side of Lincoln Ave. On the west side of the street, we used to cross the swamp area on logs. Of course, there was Warner's lake and all the activities there through out all the years I lived there, namely swimming, ice-skating and just walking around the lake. I still recall all my grammar School Days and my Sunday School activities at the Wenonah Presbyterian Church and all the youngsters we knew and played with. My memories are endless and of course, how well we remember the Millitary Academy and the performance of the Cadets on certain occasions in town. During my absence from my home town, I often thought of returning, but it was not to be. My thoughts and memories were quickly revived thru the Newsletters we now receive. My brother, Sylvanus Beucler's name is inscribed on the Veterans list in the park. I have no family left except our very own. Hank and I have two children, four grandchildren, and four greats. All are our hearts' delights and deep in filling joy. Now our home is in Jupiter, Florida, and we love it very much here.

Gods love and blessings,
Janet and Hank Picucci

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Archiving and Preservation Committee

Our committee is going strong. The *PastPerfect* software has been tested and thus far there have been no problems. It is very clear to us that this endeavor will take much more time than first expected. We have already located over 500 items and numerous collections. Our next step will be to produce the computerized database and photography for all members to take pride in and see our vast holdings. Now we have to think about ways of storing and displaying our artifacts.

Rocco F Doto · 415-1215
rockracc@aol.com

To Submit Your Committee's Report, Letters, or Articles to the WHS Newsletter

• **Provide a Disc**
to Curt Kapus (464-2485)
with your file saved as a
text or MS Word file

• **eMail Your File**
wenonahhistoricalnews@home.com

Your report or article must be
received three weeks before
our monthly meeting for
inclusion in the newsletter.

WENONAH

HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM • 2001-2002

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

eMail Address _____

Amount Paid \$ _____ Check # _____ Enclosed Cash Enclosed

Please bring this form with your payment to any meeting or mail. Thank you!

RETURN TO WENONAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY • P.O. BOX 32 • WENONAH, NJ 08090-0032

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- Monthly newsletter mailed to your home
- Monthly meetings with informative programs
- Access to various archives and memorabilia
- Network of knowledgeable historians
- Historical field trips

COST: \$10 PER FAMILY HOUSEHOLD PER YEAR

Annual Porch Party Meeting

Next Meeting will be held Friday, September 14th, 2001 • 7:00pm
Littlegrange • 300 East Mantua Avenue (The McCall Residence)



September's meeting will be our annual Porch Party at the McCalls' home. Please feel free to bring food or beverages to this opening of our "season." We look forward to seeing everyone at this always social and casual event.

Dues notice

Please note that yearly membership dues are due at the September Porch Party. Please accompany your payment of \$10 with the form on the inside of this newsletter. Thank you... your dues are what make everything possible for us!

How to Contact Us

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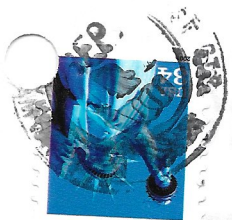
THE MISSION OF THE WENONAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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3. To encourage the protection and preservation of historical landmarks and points of interest within the Borough of Wenonah.
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Ralph + Rachel Knisell
100 W Mantua Ave
Wenonah, NJ 08090

WENONAH
Historical Society
Newsletter Committee
P.O. Box 32
Wenonah, NJ 08090-0032



WENONAH

Historical Society Newsletter



October 2001
Published by the
Historical Society of
Wenonah, NJ

A Plea for Your Knowledge



With the passing of Milton Webb, we lost one of our most prolific contributors to this newsletter. Without his monthly articles, our newsletter has been left sorely empty and wanting for pieces dealing with the past

of Wenonah coming from the hearts and minds of those who have experienced it. If you can provide information about, or write yourself, an article for a future issue, please contact us. We need your help! Thank you.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Archiving and Preservation Committee

Our knowledge of the *PastPerfect* software has grown since the last meeting as we continually find ways to make the program do what we require. We are also at this point attempting to locate any and all items owned by the Society that are being stored personally so that they may be cataloged and photographed. As we progress through this undertaking, the sheer scope and size of the job is becoming evident.

Rocco F Doto · 415-1215
rockracc@aol.com

**Please Submit Your
Committee Reports or
Articles to the Newsletter**

WENONAH

HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM • 2001-2002

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October Business Meeting

Next Meeting will be held Friday, October 12th, 2001 • 7:30pm
Wenonah Community Center (Train Station)



October's meeting will concern itself with many important business issues that we must discuss and vote upon. Your attendance and input is requested for this most important gathering. November's meeting will feature a guest speaker and program.

Dues notice

Please note that yearly membership dues are now due. Please accompany your payment of \$10 with the form on the inside of this newsletter. Thank you... your dues are what make everything possible for us!

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WENONAH

Historical Society Newsletter



November 2001
Published by the
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of Wenonah, NJ

History to be Displayed at Wenonah School

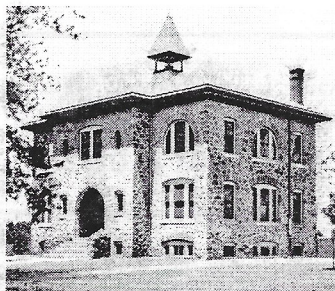
Our mission as a Historical Society is to collect, preserve, and display our town's artifacts. To this end we have been diligently working. I thank the Archive Committee for all their hard work and look forward to unveiling some of our treasures in the very near future. We have commissioned David Ramsay Cabinetmakers to design and create our FIRST Display Cabinet. This Cabinet will be put up in the Wenonah Elementary School. This will provide us with a wonderful method of bringing our history to future generations. The first display will be up in time for Parent Visitation at the Wenonah School on November 14-15, 2001. We are hoping to have a dedication ceremony as well.

I am extremely excited about finally being able to display and share our town history with the

school and the children. I hope you too will share in this enthusiastic project and volunteer to help with the set up and unveiling!

At this month's meeting, input from the membership would be greatly appreciated on what we should include in the school display. This is a wonderful opportunity to share the treasures we have been accumulating.

We will also be planning the Christmas Party for December. Please come and bring us some new ideas!



COMMITTEE REPORTS

Archiving and Preservation Committee

The Archiving Committee has completed its Inventory of all known items. Some of the items are magnificent like the WMA Sabers and Silver Trophies from the Wenonah Military academy. Some items are in poor condition like a Red Victorian Dress and a WMA Silk Flag that is beautiful but deteriorating quickly.

There are other pieces of Wenonah's History like the hand drawn map outlining the main streets of Wenonah and the Wenonah Realty Company's sale of lots on July 8th, 1916. We also have lots of photographs and postcards from the early 1900s. Most of these items are unknown to most people, particularly the newer people in town. It would sure be nice to have somewhere to show our Wenonah pride and joy.

If you have any ideas or items that you would like to contribute to the Historical Society please contact me.

Rocco F Doto · 415-1215
rockracc@aol.com

WENONAH

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November Meeting

Next Meeting will be held Friday, November 9th, 2001 • 7:30pm
Wenonah Community Center (Train Station)



Due to health issues among our officers and their families, we will not have a program at the November meeting. We are planning to use the meeting time to determine the articles, pictures, and artifacts that we want to use for the first ever school display.

Dues notice

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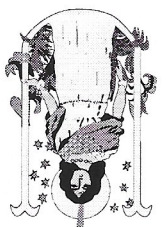
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P.O. Box 32
Newsletter Committee

WENONAH
Historical Society



WENONAH

Historical Society Newsletter



December 2001
Published by the
Historical Society
of Wenonah, NJ

President's Letter

As the holiday season approaches I want to take the time to thank you for all of your support and help. We have accomplished some important items over the last year. Our archive committee has documented and updated all our records and have prepared a database that will soon be available to all. We have accomplished setting up our first display cabinet in the Wenonah School. Be sure to stop in and see this wonderful piece. I wish to thank David Ramsay Cabinetmakers for the wonderful work they did with the design. Our first display is dedicated to the memory of Milton Webb. He would be very proud to see us finally reaching one of our goals...bringing our archives to the public's attention.

In these times of worldwide turmoil do not forget to take a minute every day to count your blessings. Let each of us look around and find ways, no matter how small, to reach out and help others. I wish you all a VERY HAPPY and HEALTHY HOLIDAY!!!

-Vicki McCall

Wenonah's Christmas in the Past

1890

The Methodists had a very interesting Christmas entertainment on Thursday evening. Beside the part taken by the little folks and the excellent part taken by the choir there was a short address by Dr. S.D. Risley, formerly a resident here. Several of the Sunday school teachers received valuable presents from their classes, and the Pastor Herr was presented with a costly gold watch, purchased by contributions from members of the church and other friends.

1891

As is its custom, the Wenonah Presbyterian Sunday school provided the inmates of the West Jersey Orphanage for Destitute Colored Children at Camden with their usual Christmas dinner of poultry and all the "fixins." (Thomas W. Synnott was one of the founders of this institution)

1893

The jingle of sleigh bells, the many shouts of school children, the whirling of the snow and the debut of ulsters and gum boots reminds us that winter is here. Christmas morning was joyously welcomed by our little folks whom Santa Claus had treated with great liberality. He made many little hearts happy and warmed the hearts of older folks with true Christmas cheer by the sight of their happy faces. "Peace and good will toward men" reigned supreme in the borough. Our post office has a very festive air in its decorations of Christmas greens.

1899

On Monday evening (Christmas night) an entertainment will be given for the Presbyterian Sunday school in Noblit's Hall. As usual at the M.E. church a collection will be received for the poor. Nothing will be refused from a ton of coal to a bar of soap.

1900

The Sunday school entertainment of the M.E. Church will be held on Christmas Eve. The children will give a cantata entitled "The New Santa Claus" forty nine taking part. Silver offering at the door for adults.

1903

A substantial and much appreciated gift comes to the Presbyterian congregation in the shape of a residence adjoining the church. The donor, Stephan Green has done much for the welfare of Wenonah and its residents, and has a warm place in the hearts of the citizens. (This Victorian house was sited where the social hall stands today.)

1904

The Christmas cantata of the Presbyterian Church will be held at Noblit's Hall. A rather unique admission will be charged - an apple or a potato or their equivalent in anything else or more. These are to be donated to the worthy poor irrespective of color, denomination or nationality.

Collected from the
Gloucester County Democrat
Gloucester County Constitution
Woodbury Daily Times

1908

A large audience enjoyed the Christmas Cantata "Sleepy Santa Claus" in the Methodist Church. The little folks chorus "The Sleepy Head Band" was quite the hit of the evening. Misses Truncer, Gringo and Jordan were very attractive as "Toy Factory Girls." Misses Eleanor Stout, Elizabeth Mehorter and Hazel Nightingale were the fairies. The scholars of the school received candy and oranges. Hon. William C. Cattell, in a stirring speech, presented the Pastor with a liberal remembrance from the congregation.

1909

The Christmas services of All Saints Mission Sunday School was held at the home of Rev. G. Livingston Bishop. Regular services at Noblit's Hall on Sunday morning at 10:45 all welcome. The Christmas cantata entitled "Santa Claus Junior" will be given December 30th and promises to be interesting.

1911

The Christmas cantata "Why Santa is Happy" rendered by the members of the M.E. Sunday school in the new recreation hall was a decided success, the participants entering into the spirit of the occasion in a most creditable manner due, no doubt, to the careful training of Mrs. Charles Hopson. Dr. Lake Gilmour as Santa Claus acted the part to perfection. The little tots claiming him for their sweet heart in song.

Wenonah School

N. Clinton Avenue and E. Elm Street

Fourth in a series of articles of some of Wenonah's more notable structures (series started by Milton Webb in February 2001)
Excerpts taken from Marge Lentz's book, A History of Wenonah

by Vicki McCall

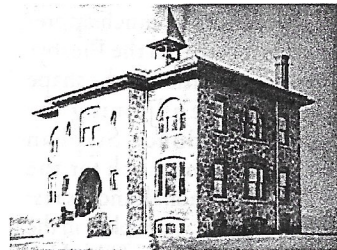


According to the annual report of The Mantua Land and Improvement Company, fifteen residential lots and four business lots had been sold and \$75,000 worth of buildings had been erected by May 8, 1873. Over the next ten years, fifty "cottages" were built which, can be identified today by their Mansford roofs, slate roofs, Mansford double doors, fish scale shingles, and towers with iron cresting.

Children of some of these new residences attended boarding schools in Philadelphia or attended the Mantua School. In 1875, parents hired Charles Buckman to drive the school aged children to the one-room Monongahela School where Sallie Baily was the teacher. This school was located three miles east of Glassboro Road, down a lane that passed the Benjamin Clark farmhouse (now on Gloucester County College property).

In 1876, District Clerk George Baily, brother of the teacher Sallie Baily, proposed a school for

Wenonah. He wrote a letter to the Gloucester County Superintendent of Public Instruction stating that "The school during



the months of September and October will meet in a room in a private dwelling. On October 31st we expect to occupy a part of the Wenonah House. Please send the books and blanks which, as I understand the matter, are furnished by the state."

After this, classes were held in The Howard-Wentzell Building located at 7 W. Mantua Avenue. This building was referred to as, "Daddy Howard's School". During the winter months, the children met at The Wenonah House, a hotel, in the dining room.

Teacher Sallie Baily was paid an annual salary of \$360 and was given an allowance to purchase a stove to heat the dining room of The Wenonah House. Classes were held in this manner from 1876 to 1878.

On March 19, 1878, the annual meeting of School District 54 in the County of Gloucester was held at the Wenonah House. The President read the following call, which had been posted in three public places: "Notice is hereby given to the legal voters of School District No. 54 in the County of

Gloucester, that the Annual School meeting will be held at the school room in the Wenonah House, on the Tuesday of the week following Town meeting, being the 19th day of March 1878 at 8 o'clock in the evening, at which meeting will be submitted the question of voting a tax to maintain a free Public school the coming year.

The amount thought to be necessary for the purpose is (\$300) three hundred dollars.

The question of building a school house will also be considered, with all matters relating there to.

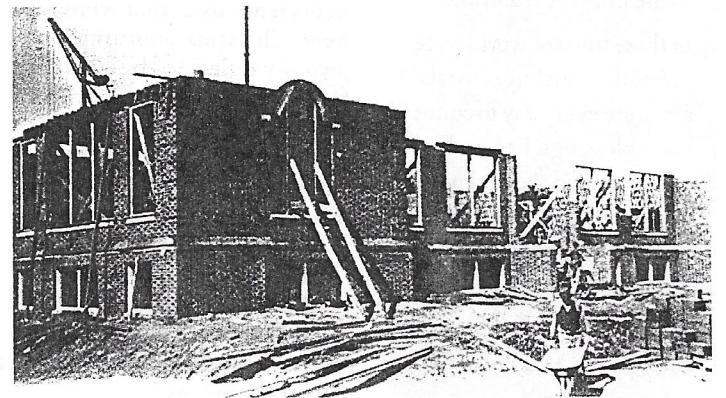
The amount thought to be necessary for this purpose is (\$2,500) twenty five hundred dollars.

Dated this Fourth day of March 1878"

-George W Baily, District Clerk

This was the official start of the Public School system in Wenonah!

The first school building was located at 6 N Marion Avenue. It was completed in 1879 and classes immediately started. This building served as the Schoolhouse until it outgrew its capacity for the growing number of school children in Wenonah. In June of 1894, the trustees of the school district sold this building at auction to Joseph Noblit.



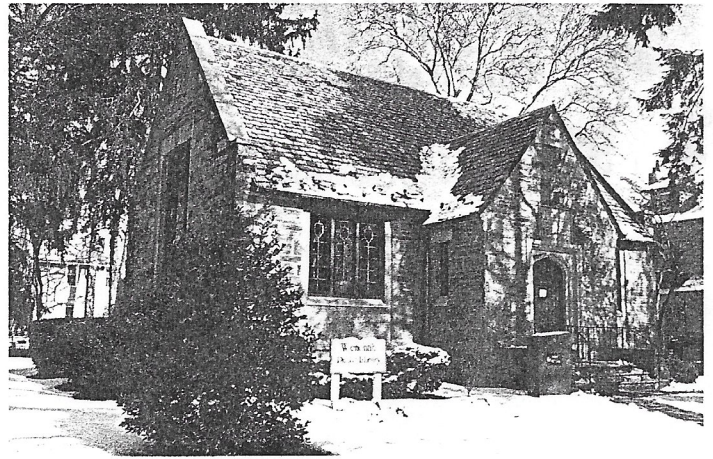
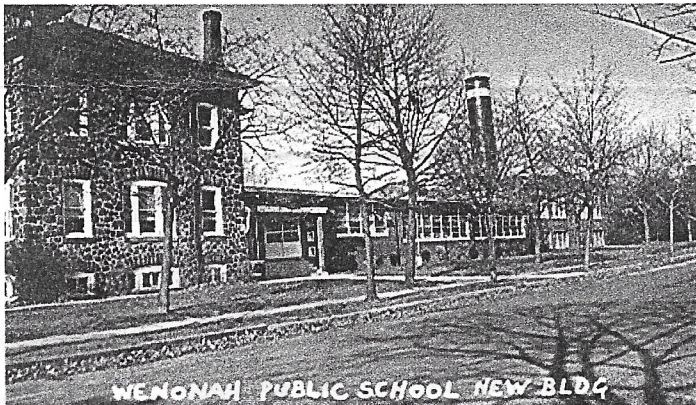
A new school was built in 1894 in the section of Wenonah known as "Sand Town." The new building was known as The Old Stone School and now houses the third and fourth grade classes. Mrs. Andrew Carey and Mrs. Edward Farr were the FIRST women in Wenonah to be elected as school Trustees. Wenonah was the second school district in Gloucester County to elect women to this post. The Old Stone School in 1894.

In the 1890's, an article in a monthly newspaper called "The Wenonah News," Wenonah was described as "a model home town with pure spring water, conveniences, hot and cold water, best

schools, established churches, and seventeen trains for the city and no salons. The article added it is "just the place for you and better still for your children."

As news of this great town spread, more people moved in and the population continued to grow. A new brick addition was added to the school ground in 1921 to house the older classes through eighth grade. In 1955 the two schools were joined by the brick addition that today houses the Kindergarten through second grade.

WENONAH SCHOOL: "A great place for you and better still for the children"



Don't forget the Wenonah Holiday House Tour!

Tour some of Wenonah's most historic public spaces and most delightfully decorated residences on Sunday, December 9th from 2-7pm. Tickets are available \$10 in advance or \$12 at the Community Center the day of the tour.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Archiving and Preservation Committee

Photography has commenced to accompany the recorded written records in our database. This is the most laborious aspect of the archiving, but will also reap the most rewards for use on the internet and future generations. Digital photographs and scans are being used to record our holdings and will be available to anyone who may request them. We are working toward a February deadline to make a presentation to the society.

If you have any ideas or items that you would like to contribute to the Historical Society please contact me.

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WENONAH

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December Christmas Party

Annual Christmas Party will be held Friday, December 14th, 2001
Community Center • 6:00pm Wine & Cheese • 6:30pm Dinner



Our annual Christmas Party costs \$15.00 per person. Please bring a door prize (unwrapped) and we will also have a special raffle!
RSVP to Jane Ramsay at 468-5593 as soon as possible.

January's meeting

Our first meeting of the year 2002 will be a special one. Bring an item or two for appraisal at our own "Antiques Road Show" on Friday, January 11th at 7:30pm at the Community Center.

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