

Newsletter

Volume 6 Issue 8 November 2008

NOVEMBER 1908
WENONAH 100 YEARS AGO

Mr. Oscar Ogden, Thomas Ritson and Clement Mattson have purchased handsome Waltham-Orient touring cars from H.D. Leap who represents the Waltham Manufacturing Company in this area.

All Saints Episcopal Mission. Service in Noblitt's Hall tomorrow at 10:45 a.m. All welcome.

The town was very lively yesterday. Every train bringing a load of visitors and the beautiful weather kept them on the streets enjoying the air.

The woods were full of gunners here yesterday, but the bags were rather small. Whether due to unskillful marksmanship or lack of rabbits is hard to tell.

Captain Persey is no longer a member of the Campers Union at the Wenonah Military Academy. The union was organized for the special benefit of the bachelors of the academy and lost a very active member when he quietly married Miss Ratcliffe of Camden.

A family passing through town on the way to their Thanksgiving dinner met with an accident on Marion Avenue. The horse they were driving fell and broke a leg and had to be shot.

The epidemic of colds, which almost put a number of cadets in bed, has almost subsided and all were able to eat turkey today.

The Ladies Aid of the M.E. Church particularly requests that you defer buying your Christmas gifts till you come to their supper and bazaar next Tuesday. Beautiful articles, useful and ornamental will be on sale. A table of dressed dolls, at very reasonable prices, presided over by Miss Jessie Baylies' class of little girls will be one of the features. Mrs. Cline's class of young ladies will have a Christmas tree covered with gifts. Ice cream will be on sale, also cakes, bread and pie.

WHS OFFICERS 2008

President	Louis McCall
Vice Pres.	Barbara Capelli
Secretary	Jo Dominy
Treasurer	Carol Wiltsee
Trustee	Betty MacLeod
Trustee	Vicki McCall

Meetings are held the second Friday of the month at the Community Center except June, July and August

A travelling Uncle Tom's Cabin Company will entertain our people tonight at Noblitt's Hall.

The public school building has been connected to the sewerage system and sanitary conditions will be much improved.

John L Drummer was elected constable over Thomas J. Savage, who was on both tickets by a 61 vote majority.

There is considerable discussion as to what use the room over the

new fire house should be put other than regular meetings of the Fire Company. There seems to be a desire on the part of some to use it as a smoking room and a place to play cards. Of course there will be no gambling under the new administration.

A ballot was taken this morning at the Academy on the Presidential candidates and the results are as follows. Taft 38, Chafin 3, Bryan 6.

Fine Black Sateen Petticoats \$1.00 Outing Flannel 25 and 50 cents Gingham 25, 50 and 75 cents try a pair of our ladies 25 cent stockings. H. E. Wood 185 So. Broad Street Woodbury.

The painting of the Methodist Church is about to be done and it will be a decided improvement.

A Republican landslide. Taft sweeps the country in the great contest for the nation's next executive. Gloucester County gives Taft 1610 plurality and elects entire county ticket. (Wenonah's vote Taft 138 Bryan 18)

The young ladies of the Embroidery Club which meet at the home of Miss Clara Turner Saturday afternoon proposes to fill a bride's chest for the first member married.

With the streets well scattered with masqueraders and the Academy dance in full swing Saturday evening, Wenonah was quite lively for once.

Woodbury Daily Times
November 1908

“A BOROUGH COMMISSION, A FIRE HOSE CARRIAGE AND A FISH FARM” 1883 - 1896

Excerpts from the book “Wenonah” by Marjorie K. Lentz

(continued from the October 2008 newsletter)

Continuing with the chapter entitled “A Borough Commission, a Fire Hose Carriage and a Fish Farm describing the growth and activities in Wenonah during the waning years of the nineteenth century.

“To furnish pleasure in the community in the line of outdoor sports” the Wenonah Field Club was started in 1890. The Club used Stephen Greene’s athletic park¹ which was completely enclosed by a high board fence and included a grandstand where he held his private horse shows. A bicycle track, baseball diamond and tennis courts were built and under the grandstand a “commodious room” was built for “storing the wheels of those who ride to the grounds to witness the baseball games.” Sixty-five persons signed for membership at the organizational meeting. Opened to everyone the membership had a sliding scale, an active member holding voting power and paying five dollars annually, an associate member entitled to a voice but no vote and paying \$2.50 a year and an honorary member paying \$1.50.

Wenonah had an organization for everyone. The Wenonah Assembly scheduled hops in the hotel. The Wenonah Singing Class met for regular weekly rehearsals. The Progressive Euchre Club met in the hotel, the Wenonah Outing Club had straw rides and the Wenonah Cycle club ran bicycle trips to Vineland. The Wenonah Branch of the Needlework Guild sewed three hundred garments a year and the Wenonah branch of the New Jersey Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and the Wenonah Women’s Christian Temperance Union all had activities. A Republican Club was organized as well as a Masonic “club,” the Citizen’s League protested against the evils of the race track and the Lodge of Junior Order of United American Mechanics had a fife and drum corps. The Chautauqua Circle planned free lectures and entertainments ranging from ventriloquists to elocutions, from sciopic views to lectures on physical education.

The Wenonah House was sold in 1883 by the Mantua Land and Improvement Company for \$12,000. During the first years of private ownership,

a newspaper account noted that “comparatively few boarders at the Wenonah House this summer, though why, it is difficult to explain as the town never looked prettier and the Wenonah House never so well conducted.” In 1884 it was sold again this time at auction to General William Sewell for \$6,500 including all the furniture. The following week the newspaper reported that “now that the sale has been made” the people “are cracking their heads because they weren’t on hand to bid. It is said to be the best furnished hotel in South Jersey.”

Immediately Gen. Sewell made improvements. The hotel received a new roof, interior decoration, steam boiler and pump. Again the hotel was opened and filled to capacity. However the Wenonah House soon closed and an account states that the “Wenonah House is of no advantage either to its owner or to the Borough. Every friend of Wenonah has had a feeling of regret that the Borough should be obliged to look at this closed house.”

In 1892 Stephen Greene, Dr. George W. Bailey and Thomas Synnott formed the Wenonah Hotel Company. The hotel was purchased and a tremendous remodeling program was commenced. An annex of 75 rooms was added, the exterior remodeled and a separate building was erected for billiard and pool tables, shuffle board and ten pin alleys. Servants quarters² were built in back of the hotel, an ice house was built for summer storage and a sewage system was installed. In May 1894 the hotel was reopened but it was no longer the Wenonah House. It was now the Wenonah In and it again resumed its whirl of concerts, hops, nightly entertainments and daily parade of turnouts.

With the increased population in Wenonah the school had outgrown its capacity and in 1894 a stone school was opened in the section of Wenonah popularly called Sand Town. The original school building was purchased by Joseph Noblitz and it was known as Noblitz Hall where the Wenonah Hall Association produced entertainments, elections were held and any one could present a musical program, an oyster supper, a dance or a lecture for a rental fee.

¹Jessica Wood Langston athletic field, East Cedar Street

²Site of 106 E. Mantua Ave.

Mrs. Andrew Carey and Mrs. Edward Farr were the first women in Wenonah to be elected as school trustees and Wenonah was the second school district in Gloucester County to elect women to this post.

The Mantua Land and Improvement Company continued to sell its lots and at one public sale held in the park, 116 lots were sold in one day. Also the Company sold houses it constructed, graded the streets and covered them with gravel and made extensive improvements on the Old Stone Farm house which it subsequently sold to W.J. Ladell. Among the builders who purchased lots and built houses for resale were Daniel Brown, Horatio J. Mulford, Stephen Greene, a. McFarland and Thomas W. Synnott. Double cottages were built facing the railroad tracks and a row of houses on West Willow Street was named Brown Town for the builder. Some builders used the identical plans on various lots and they can be identified throughout Wenonah.

On the eastern edge of town Thomas W. Synnott built a stone house³. His barn, greenhouses and caretaker's house covered a large acreage extending to Glassboro Road. Bordering East Mantua Avenue was Synnott's Pond. On the southeastern edge of Wenonah Stephen Greene built his home. His dwelling⁴, the dwelling of John Truncer⁵, his caretaker, the coachman's dwelling⁶, the laundry and living quarters for the cook and laundress⁷, occupied a block long complex. Remaining also are a gazebo from his Dutch garden, a peacock house and a brick wall⁸ mortared with flecks of oyster shells which bordered his peacock run. Also Greene developed Marion Avenue at his own expense, lined the neighboring streets with pine trees, built a dam at the foot of Marion Avenue and developed a lake named lake Cornelia⁹ for Cornelia Truncer. A two-

storied boathouse and a Japanese-designed bridge were built along the lake front. Arbored walks from his rose gardens¹⁰ led to a glen known as the Hermitage. A Japanese gardener cared for the gardens which included a greenhouse for the growing of carnations¹¹.

Residents had pride in their well-cared lawns. Iron fences surrounded property lines, stone walks were laid and nearly all the houses were illuminated.

In the 1890's a monthly newspaper, the Wenonah News, was published by E. Richmond of Philadelphia and William C. Cattell, real estate agents. Articles noted that swings were needed by the Wenonah Park Association for Camel's Back where the Fourth of July was being celebrated, a bridge was needed across the railroad tracks at Elm Street, and an observance was needed for Memorial Day. And, of course, there were advertisements for the sale of lots and houses in Wenonah which was described as the "Germantown of West Jersey, the model home town" with "pure spring water, conveniences, hot and cold water, best schools, established churches and seventeen trains for the city and sixteen trains from the city, and no saloons." The advertisement added that it is "just the place for you and better still for your children."

Businesses increased in Wenonah. Joseph Warner who had a milk, ice and ice cream route, moved into the former Miller's house and the lake became known as Warner's Lake. Sylvester H. Chew and James Chew had a livery stable and coal yard¹², R.J. Clark and later S.D. Fisler had a general store¹³, James Baylies also sold groceries as well as hay¹⁴ and Jesse English had a general store as well as serving as postmaster¹⁵. George Poor built an aviary¹⁶ and raised carrier pigeons.

³202 East Mantua Ave.

⁴201 and 203 South Clinton Ave. And also a wing destroyed by fire

⁵204 South Marion Ave.

⁶106 East Willow Street

⁷Rear of 201 South Clinton Ave.

⁸207 South Clinton Ave.

⁹Site of west side of dam on South Marion Ave.

¹⁰208 South Marion Ave.

¹¹100 East Cedar Street

¹²Site of 6 West Mantua Ave.

¹³3 East Mantua Ave.

¹⁴Site of 2 West Mantua Ave.

¹⁵1 East Mantua Ave.

¹⁶On site at rear of 205 South Marion Ave.

WENONAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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Here

PO Box 32
Wenonah, New Jersey 08090

*PLEASE TAKE NOTE: OUR HOLIDAY PARTY MEETING WILL BE HELD FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12TH AT 5:00 PM.
TO BE CATERED BY THE TELFORD INN, THE COST WILL BE \$20 PER PERSON
CALL PAT AT 468-6661 OR HELEN AT 468-5353
RESERVATIONS WILL ALSO BE TAKEN AT THE NOVEMBER MEETING 11/14/08*

WENONAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2009

Membership Benefits

- MONTHLY NEWSLETTER MAILED TO YOUR HOME
- MONTHLY MEETINGS WITH INTERESTING PROGRAMS
- ACCESS TO HISTORICAL ARCHIVES AND MEMORABILIA
- INFORMATION BY KNOWLEDGEABLE WENONAHIANs

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

AMOUNT PAID \$ _____

CHECK _____ CASH _____

BRING FORM AND PAYMENT TO MEETING, OR MAIL. THANK YOU

WHS PO Box 32, WENONAH, NJ 08090

DUES: \$15.00 PER FAMILY HOUSEHOLD PER YEAR
