

Wenonah Historical Society

Newsletter

Next Meeting 7:30 pm Friday January 9, 2009

Volume 7 Issue 1 January 2009

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As we ring in the New Year I'd like to thank past President Lou McCall for all his hard work and dedication. Also, I would like to thank Jo Dominy for her tireless work as Secretary and her "all around knowledge" of our membership. I've counted on her many times and I hope she will continue to allow us to utilize her knowledge going forward.

Newly named for two-year terms are me, Treasurer Carol Wiltsee, Vicki McCall as Secretary and Brenda Birkland, Vice President.

This year I am looking forward to many new and special presentations. For instance, in February we celebrate Abraham Lincoln's 200th Birthday with a much anticipated presentation from Reverend Frank Colburn. In March Katherine MacGregor will speak on her Historic Wenonah and WMA recollections. Those are just two of many great speakers we look forward to hearing from. This month's presentation will be by local resident and past speaker Paul Lader.

This New Year we will hope to finally see progress on our most beloved Train Station and also hopefully the completion of Marge Lentz's book on Wenonah. We have some other goals for the new year within our membership but most

important let's not forget those things most important. Our friends and family that we hold so dear to us are what is truly important. In this time of bad economics and warring countries, we should make sure to enjoy the things that don't cost us money. This year, make sure to reach out and connect with your loved ones and maybe bring them to one of our meetings, we would love to have new guests and see old ones. Wenonah was built on fellowship

WHS OFFICERS 2009

President	Barbara Capelli
Vice Pres.	Brenda Birkland
Secretary	Vicki McCall
Treasurer	Carol Wiltsee
Trustee	Betty MacLeod
Trustee	Betty Rose

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Friday of the month at the
Community Center
except June, July and August

and working hard together. Let's do that this year and hope to enjoy peace and prosperity in 2009.

Have a Great Year!

Barb Capelli

TRAIN STATION REHABILITATION

We have been informed the funding for the station restoration has been confirmed and that work could start as early as the coming spring.

Outside improvements will consist of brickwork repair, gable end stucco-timber replacement. Also exterior woodwork repairs and replacement of the storm sash.

On the inside the plaster will be repaired and painted while termite damage in the basement will be attended to.

MARJORIE LENTZ'S BOOK "WENONAH"

Marjorie Lentz's second edition book *Wenonah*, finished at last. It was first written and published in 1976, in time for both the nation's Bicentennial and the dedication of our railroad station/Community Center. Marjorie permitted me to help her with typing and technical assistance and it was a lot of fun. Because of the arthritis in her hands she can no longer type efficiently. Instead she resorted to a "cut and paste" system to give me information for inclusion in the book. Her system resembled a method used by kidnapers for creating untraceable ransom demands. The book does contain some new material and photographs along with explanatory footnotes and an index. All that remains to be done is to find a book binder to reproduce the book at a reasonable price so it can be used by the Society for fund-raising purposes. Hopefully the book will be available in time for our February meeting.

Jack Sheppard

Wenonah 100 Years Ago

Clifford Armbruster, assistant foreman of the section gang on the railroad came in contact with the third rail below here yesterday and was hurled quite a distance.

Remember the oyster dinner to be given by the fireman at Noblitt's Hall Saturday evening. A good supper for a good cause. Price 35 cents.

The Mysoytis Sewing Circle will meet tomorrow afternoon at the home of Mrs. Sam Mehorter on Clinton Avenue.

The Wenonah Fire Company housed their apparatus in the new fire house this afternoon. The members of borough council were present to witness the event. (The apparatus at that time was a horse drawn ladder wagon and three hose carts.)

While going home last night Dean Williams was startled by hearing a strange noise in back of him at Synnott's woods. He turned around and saw a very strange animal. It stood about four feet high and had a head like a horse. When he saw it he struck a bee line for his house on the other side of the woods and did not come out any more that night. (There had been several sightings of the "Jersey Devil" in Wenonah during this period.)

There was a skating carnival on Green's Lake last night. It was largely attended by the Academy boys. They declared they saw the devil. They said it spit fire and had a head on it like the Gorgon Medusa.

The explosion at Gibbstown this morning shook the houses here like leaves. Several thought an earthquake had come.

M. F. Lummus. M. D. of Pitman has opened up an office on the northwest corner of Monroe and Mantua Avenues.

The revival services will continue all week at the Methodist Church and the pastor, Rev. O. S. Duffield would like to see a large congregation out every night.

A company of the cadet battalion, Wenonah Military Academy, under command of Major John R. Jones, will give the exhibition drill Wednesday

evening at the military reception and ball to be given by Company I, Third Regiment, N.G.P., at Horticultural Hall, Philadelphia.

Nuncio is the undefeated checker player of Wenonah. (He was the local barber.)

The Boy's Brigade held a camp fire at the church last night.

Miss Jean Duke held a donkey party at her home last night.

Wayne Ralston, of Philadelphia, was the guest of Lewis Holt yesterday.

Andrew Savage has returned home after working in Woodbury on Locke's express wagon. Andy said it was too cold for him.

A freight car door fell from the morning express yesterday on the track below here and it came near wrecking the Atlantic City Flyer, which was flagged just in time to avert a disaster.

The pictures of the fox hunt are now on sale at Buckhart's barber shop. It is a very good picture, especially of Lawyer Horace F. Nixon mounted on his steed. (This was in tradition of over a hundred years in Mantua and Carpenter's Landing. Many Wenonah people participated.)

An illustrated temperance lecture will be given in the Methodist Church on Thursday evening. This will be quite a treat for the people of this town and everybody should turn out if they want to see some fine pictures and hear some good singing.

Harold Buzby has returned to George School after spending the holidays with his parents.

The Wenonah Military cadets have started practicing for their minstrel show which will be held some time in February.

A good many people wonder why the brakemen on the freight train which arrives here at 7 o'clock wave their lanterns after they leave the station. Why do they?

Woodbury Daily Times January 1909 mhw

Genealogy of Thomas W. Synnott – A Founder of Wenonah

From: "*Sinnott genealogy : Michael Sinnott of Harpswell, Maine, his ancestry and descendants : also records of other Sinnetts, Synnotts, etc. in Ireland and America,*" by Charles N. Sinnott

Concord, N. H: Rumford Press, 1910, 142 pgs. page 122

Mr. Thomas W. Synnott, Wenonah NJ gives the following sketch of his family line:

- (1) Martin Synnott, b. Wexford, Ireland 1775; d. in New Jersey, 1812; studied in Wexford (Ireland) College; merchant; came to America about 1793; lived at Mary's Landing, N.J. and in Philadelphia PA; m. 1804, Hannah Scull, b. 1780; d. 1840. His brother, John Synnott, lived near Wexford, Ireland in 1832, his mother with him.
- (2) Dr. Miles Synnott, b. 1806; d. 1867; lived Glassboro, N. J 1833-1867; graduated 1831 from Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia PA; m. 1842 Harriet Heston Whitney, b. 1814; d. 1854; the daughter of Eben Whitney, who was descended from Eben Whitney who came to New England in 1640, and of Bathsheba Heston, the daughter of Col. Thomas Heston, an officer in the Revolutionary War, and who in 1784 began the manufacture of glass at what is now known as Glassboro, N.J.
- (3) Abigail Whitney Synnott, b. 1843; m. Isaac Moffett.
 - (4) Herbert N. Moffett, b. 1877
- (3) **Thomas Whitney Synnott**, b. 1845; resides Wenonah NJ; a very efficient elder in the Presbyterian Church; trustee of Princeton Theological Seminar and of Lincoln University; member of Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath School work; member of the General Assembly's Committee on Evangelization; president of the First National Bank, Glassboro NJ; retired from active business some years since; m. July 1872 Mary D. Eldridge, b. Philadelphia PA 1848, the daughter of Septimus T. Eldridge and Mary Pierce; these parents lived at Wilmington DE and at Philadelphia PA
 - (4) Clayton E. Synnott, b. 1876; m. 1897 Faith Botsford
 - (5) Marion B. Synnott, b. 1898
 - (5) Thomas W. Synnott, b. 1906
- (3) Fannie W. Synnott, b. 1847; unmarried
- (2) Margaret Synnott, b. 1808; deceased; m. Rev. John Crouch
- (2) Catherine Synnott, b. 1810; deceased; m. John Porch
- (2) Dr. Martin Synnott, b. 1812; d. 1871; graduated from Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia PA, 1839; no male heirs

Note: The Synnott Mansion is located at the northeast corner of Mantua Ave at Clinton

Newsletter

Volume 7 Issue 2 February 2009

A MESSAGE FROM
PRESIDENT BARB CAPELLI

Dear Members;

We are looking forward to seeing all of you this next meeting to celebrate Abraham Lincoln's 200th birthday. This Friday's meeting is sure to be a HUGE crowd pleaser with our guest speaker Frank Colburn.

So much has been written on our 44th president and in his honor, this recent Inauguration of President Obama, the President used Abraham Lincoln's bible as he was sworn into office...twice!!

Even during this current time of economic woes and foreign wars, in a message to Congress in December of 1862, President Lincoln was quoted, "The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the storm present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew, and act anew. We must disenthrall ourselves, and then we shall save our country."

How similar are the times?? We celebrate this 200th Birthday with our local Lincoln Historian, Frank Colburn and welcome all of you and your guests this week. Frank is the former curator and director of the museum at Lincoln Memorial University in Harrowgate, TN. He was most inspired by the great man's writing on the promise of the Declaration of Independence, which Lincoln felt granted all men the "right to rise" to their full potential, regardless of their origins.

Please join us this Valentines weekend, bring your friends --Vicki and I are in charge of the snacks and

beverages so no dieting this weekend!!

MEMBERSHIP DUES REMINDER
AND EMAIL OPTION

As many of you may know, our membership dues run from January to January. Please either mail your dues using the attached form or bring the form and payment to the next meeting. In an effort to save money, we are providing the option of receiving the newsletter by email. If only half of you participate, we can save nearly \$500 a year! Circle either yes or no on the form about receiving the newsletter by email. You may also email me at sbbirkland@verizon.net to let me know your preference. We realize some of you may not have email or do not wish to participate. We will still send the newsletter to you by U.S. mail. We are also interested in knowing your email for special announcements and reminders.

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FOUNDERS' DAY CELEBRATION
SATURDAY APRIL 18, 2009

Building upon the success of the first Founders' Day, a borough wide committee has chosen the theme "Celebrating the Train Station." The date was moved to April this year to coincide with the original Founders' Day in April as noted on your borough calendar. You may contact either Stephanie Berenato at 464-8686 or Brenda Birkland at 609-504-6917 if you are interested in helping. Rain date is Sunday, April 19.

TRAIN STATION REHABILITATION

According to Borough Engineer Dave Kreck, an informational meeting for prospective bidders will be held on February 10 at 2:00 p.m. at Borough Hall. Bids will be received February 20. An award could be made as early as February 26 and work could start in April.

RECALLING CHILDHOOD DAYS
IN WENONAH

Have you ever found a treasure while yard selling in town? Several years ago, I was at a yard sale and purchased a book. I later found inside the book an old newspaper article entitled "Former Resident of Wenonah Recalls Childhood Days of 1890s." Although I have shared some of the article with you before, I wanted to reprint it here in its entirety. I also recently obtained a document written by the late Milton Webb that describes his childhood memories of Wenonah from 1938-1944. I thought it would fun to read these two articles together. Milton's piece will be continued next month.

Brenda Birkland

To the Editor:

It was a nice little village, bearing an Indian name “Wenonah”; a quiet, safe country town, ideal for bringing up children.

I was born in Philadelphia in 1885, but my first recollection of being alive would be 1890 in Wenonah where both my sisters were born. There was ravine called “The Glen” in that part of the town then known as Frogtown. The glen was a shady, cool place, containing a spring with good pure, clear water. The outflow from the spring had been dammed up to form a very small pond in which I remember seeing catfish, probably placed there by some neighborhood men for future use in a frying pan. Many a drink we boys enjoyed from that spring, returning home from swimming in the railroad culvert, the outlet from upper lakes.

The house nearest the glen was occupied by a crippled Civil War veteran named Jennings and our generous government at that time probably gave him \$8-\$10 per month pension. I remember hearing some of his war experiences as he told them to my father.

Over Mantua Creek was an old wooden bridge, a spot that appealed to smaller boys as we climbed over the framework or maybe fished in the creek, which at that time was a fairly good sized stream. On the Wenonah side of

the creek there stood a canning factory for a few years, which eventually went out of business and to ruin. A short walk down from the factory was a sandy spot in the creek, this being the place where younger boys learned to swim, as the water was never over our shoulders and as we learned, we graduated to Warner’s Pond. Didn’t need school taxes for pools to teach boys how to keep their heads above water in those days. Of course, we went in skinny – not exactly Atlantic City style of that period.

During the early nineties, from Mantua Pike, then a toll road to the W.J.R.R., the creek was bordered with woods, making a pleasant place to roam during summer school vacations. There are two lakes, upper and lower. The lower lake was called “Warner’s Pond. The upper lake served the borough for its water supply, pumped by a small engine used in a kind of shanty. The water was pumped to a wooden tank which stood on stilts, situated where the present standpipe is now located, I guess, as I haven’t been there for 70 years. The old tank leaked and ferns and grasses grew under it.

The lower lake, as I first remember it, had an icehouse, which was filled each winter with ice, packed in sawdust, for summer months. Also there was an old broken down grist mill and I really believe if someone would

dig down in the sand they would find the old grinding stones covered at the time the lake’s outlet was moved to its present site, at the time the new pumping station was installed rising artesian water. Of course, we boys had to supervise both the building of the standpipe and the pumping station, which was quite an event.

I first went to school in what was Noblitt’s Hall. The next year our new school was ready for occupancy. Teachers were Miss Bugbee, Miss Taylor and Mrs. Talman, all wonderful teachers and strict disciplinarians – and you present kids need not think they were not.

Let’s not overlook Clark’s store. Mr. Clark was there in 1890 and I don’t know how many years before that time. He carried groceries, hardware, horse feed, pots, brooms, buckets, apparently all the necessities of life. He had a clerk who went around in the morning collecting orders, making delivery in the afternoon by horse and wagon. In the store was a pot belly stove and a couple of chairs for a few old-timers to pass the time, gossip and at the same time, sample the big round cheese – free. Wish I had some of the things from the old store – they would now be valuable, especially the wooden Indian which stood on the porch of the store.

We had an Italian shoe repair man who lived in the old railroad station and in the fall made his

own wine, pressing the fruit in his bare feet. Also a barber shop with its row of shaving mugs, and a livery stable (Chews). When President McKinley was elected in 1896, Sumner Dawson and I made a nickel a run from Noblitt's Hall, the voting booth, to the telegraph office located in the R.R. Station run by Mr. Tuft, for interested Republicans.

I could go on reminiscing back to our Christmases', Fourth of Julys, church entertainments, etc., and I just wonder if the present generation of youngsters will be able to look back to such a happy period in their childhoods.

John C. Holinger

Milton Webb's childhood memories, Time period around 1938 to 1944

The town was much smaller in number of houses and population. There were many lots in which to play football, baseball etc. On our side of the tracks there were the Academy lots where there was the Academy tennis court maintained for a while and the kids put up a basketball standard. This was after the drill hall was torn down. Up where Eddie Fredricks lives there was a good tennis court but this was pretty well closed to us kids as there was a tennis club made up of adults. I believe Evan Woodward ran this. Of course there was the ball field now called the Cedar Avenue field.

More organized sports were run there. Lots of time the big kids

would throw us out. At that time there was a full cinder track going around the field. A lot of people used this for track and also bicycles. There was a big grandstand which I witnessed burning down. The kids built a lot of model airplanes and that was the launching spot. Bob Nicholls built the best models unfortunately he died in the polio epidemic in 1949 or 50. Behind the ball field there was a persimmon grove and at times people used the old academy rifle range there (Harry Simmerman might remember this). A lot of the kids had 22 rifles. Below that was Greens boat house which we used until Joe Truncer, the guardian of the Greene estate would throw us out. That also burned dow'n. Greens lake was full of turtles which we would shot with our 22's. Martin Dipper was the ace on this. This was a good fishing lake particularly for calico bass.. This was a great place until Elliot built the house that Dewey Parker lives in today -he threw us out but we had our revenge when he ended up bankrupt, lived in a trailer where the Jonas Barrel Co was located and Knapp took over and opened up the lake again. Unfortunately, on our side of the tracks a large area was closed to us-This was Hassricks or Royals. They erected a cyclone fence around the lake which partially closed this off to us. However, we fished by concealing ourselves in the bushes. On the west side of the lake was a boat house. It was filled

with phonograph records which we skimmed across the lake. If the lake is dredged there will be a wealth of Victor Talking Machine discs uncovered. Diana Hassrick had beautiful horses and they were stabled in the huge barn where Bob and Jane Kitz live. There were also cows which were Jerseys imported from Europe. Mr. Hess ran the farm and we started working for him in the summer. We had quite a team- Earl Cox. Lewis Fink, Jimmy Gill, Joan Hill and Ruby May Dewitt. This gave us fishing privileges as a fringe benefit. Where the Lutheran Church is sited there was an orchard but the big farming was done out across from the Tall Pines Inn in what is now the Woods at Wenonah. This was planted with rye, oats and barley for the horses. But greater opportunities arose when Tommy Synnott opened up the chicken farm the day the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. Mr. Hendrickson built the chicken house which later became the site of many police and fireman's banquets There were many fond memories there. In the barn there was large carriage which was a beauty, a sleigh and a little sulky. Also there were two horses, one of which Tom shot when he was trying to eliminate rats in .the barn. Also he had a 1904 Chalmers automobile which I believe was bought from George Fredrick.

Newsletter

Volume 7 Issue 3 March 2009

A MESSAGE FROM
PRESIDENT BARB CAPELLI

Dear Members;

This coming spring reminds me that I have some housekeeping to do. With that being said, I have some reminders and some thoughts to share with you about our Historical Society.

Please, don't forget the Membership dues are past due now...so please, be sure to fill out your membership forms for us. We are updating our current dues list and hope that we all are up to date!

Our February meeting was a HUGE success and we thank Frank Colburn for his wonderful presentation. Although the food was totally yummy for this special – Valentine-Lincoln's Birthday celebration, I want to remind everyone that our refreshments need only to be a few snacks or sweet treats and a beverage of choice. With the difficult economic times we want to keep things simple as we enjoy the social time after a presentation.

We are also very, very excited about the buzz surrounding our Train Station Restoration, bids for the work to be done is being reviewed and I am confident things will be progressing quickly. Since we have been advised that restoration could start soon, I want to let you all know that our April and May meetings will be held in the Municipal building to ensure all of our safety. Our June picnic location will be decided and that information passed onto you soon.

Founders Day is going to be another super celebration of our Train Station and it is moving along very well with so many great ideas and volunteer involvement. Don't forget to save April 18th on your calendar.

Something else we might want to consider, Clean Communities Day is May 2nd We need to have at least ten volunteers in order to qualify for the \$500 that is donated to our Society. If anyone is interested, please let me

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know. We can decide if we want to join in the effort if we have enough volunteers.

The speaker for our next meeting is Katherine MacGregor, she promises a great surprise for us...so many surprises that she wouldn't even tell me what she is bringing! Her father, Dave Knight, was an instructor at the Wenonah Military Academy. She is going to present an interview with the oldest living cadet of the Academy. I am sure she will be bringing a variety of show and tell items from that interview.
Barbara Capelli

BOOK SIGNING BY MARJORIE
LENTZ AND JACK SHEPPARD
HISTORY OF WENONAH

As many of you know who were at our last meeting, we had a surprise unveiling of the History of Wenonah book by Marjorie Lentz. Both Marjorie and Jack Sheppard, Sr., who provided consultation and technical assistance on the book, have agreed to a book signing at our next meeting on Friday, March 13. The books are \$10 for members and \$15 for non-members. The book was first written and published in 1976, in time for both the nation's Bicentennial and the dedication of our railroad station/Community Center. What a timely release of this new second edition with all the upcoming restoration at the train station.!

TRAIN STATION REHABILITATION

Bids were received February 25th and there was a successful bidder, Aliano Brothers from Vineland, and the bid was well within the amount of the grant. This should mean all of the hoped for repair work can be done and there may be money left over for some extras. This was an excellent outcome for the future of the building and we are hoping for a Grand Opening on the Fourth of July.

FOUNDERS' DAY

Do you have any photos, fun stories, and wonderful memories of the train station restoration from 1975? We would love to use them for Founders' Day. Please contact Stephanie Berenato at 464-8686.

MILTON WEBB'S CHILDHOOD
MEMORIES IN WENONAH
1938 TO 1944

(continued from the February 2009 newsletter)

Previously the topic was the farming done in what is now the Woods of Wenonah. Tommy Synnott opened up a chicken farm here. Mr. Hendrickson built a chicken house which later became the site of many police and fireman's banquets. There were many fond memories here. In the barn there was a large carriage which was a beauty, a sleigh and a little sulky. Tom had a 1904 Chalmers automobile which I believe was bought from George Fredrick.

Tommy also had a twelve cylinder Lincoln car. Anyway the business was not profitable as we developed our own egg route. Another dividend to the town was the harvesting of the runaway chickens. Mrs. Synnott spent a fortune buying food for us. Once a month we had open house in the basement where we could dance, play pool and watch movies thanks to her. It seems to me that on VE day (Victory in Europe) Tom sold the chickens to either Rode or Demme. I remember the sadness we felt when we loaded them on the truck. On the subject of chickens, quite a few people in Wenonah had them, also pigeon lofts, and a house was not well appointed if it didn't have a grape arbor.

If you got what they called a contagious disease you would get a sign put on the house so informing the public. This was quite a prestigious addition to your house. It seems almost appalling the number of diseases that went around town including head lice (Mrs. Lapp, the school nurse would check you periodically), ring worm which the whole gang got supposedly from playing with Hop sons' dog Ziggy, the nastiest dog in town. Also mixed in with this were impetigo, pin

worms, chicken pox, measles, mumps, pink eye, flu, and a variety of ailments which are unknown today.

The Legion hall was a big center of activity for the kids. Friday night we would have movies which were of an earlier vintage with Buster Keaton and Harold Lloyd. On Saturday you would go to Woodbury to the Rialto Theater. Our friendship with Joan Hill whose dad was the owner paid off with free passes, otherwise it would have cost 11 cents, however the train fare was ten cents. Sky King was our hero at the movies. A big occasion was when Earl threw up over the railing in the balcony. Also there were dances, strawberry festivals, Legion covered dish suppers, plays and a super drum and bugle corps run by Les Webb. They were all World War I veterans and they were looked at as the kids today view the Vietnam veterans. Doctor Black was in the Spanish-American War.

The train played a big part in the life of the community, the big thrill being the first trip to Philadelphia without your parents. The electric trains had a third rail which was a fascination to the kids. Every year in school a representative of the railroad would give a talk to the kids about the power in the rail, stating there was more electric in this than in the electric chair in Trenton. Smart little kid Earl Cox called him a liar which sent him to Miss Tonkin for dismissal from school. Practically every boy carried a penny in his pocket which was squashed by the wheels of the steam locomotive.

Included in the treasures you carried was tar to chew on out of the street and the white paste that was in cloak room in each class. (I often wondered why they called it a cloak room) and marbles. The marble matches were held in front of the American Store. Mrs. Wentzell wouldn't allow us in front of their store. She was awesome to say the least. If you were really good you went to Wildwood to the marble tournament. I think Donny Rowland

went one year. Mrs. Wentzell had a goldfish pond out front of the grocery store which was a fascination to us. We would throw stones at the fish. One day she hit Earl Cox so hard with the broom that he went in the pond head first. Louis Fink, the brains of the outfit informed her that we were going to sue her so he also went in the pond. Next door Miss Wilan had penny candy in big glass jars. She would always check your hands for cleanliness before you would reach in but would be very kind and say Earl let me get the candy for you. She also sold spools of thread. But the greatest of all stores was Foster Mullins drug store on the corner where Duffield Realty is today. Before him was Doc. Sheisser who I remember had a goatee. Foster's store had an old fashioned fountain made out of marble and ice cream chairs with matching tables. A coke was a nickel, a soda a quarter and he dished out ice cream. Foster had a Ford Phaeton automobile. A thrill to us was when he would race through town and clear all four tires off the road at the railroad crossing. Bill Scank, the colored man from parts unknown, worked for him. The last time Foster saw him was when he was entrusted to make a deposit at the bank in Woodbury.

We spent a lot of time in the park. One section up in the front we called bums paradise where we sat. Walter Zigwolf was the state policeman from the Mantua Barracks; he worked along with a man named Montgomery. Zickwolf was like a god to us, he wore leather boots and gloves and rode on a motorcycle. When he would drive through town we would watch with awe. He would always gun the motor when he passed us.

On Sunday there was a regular list of taboos, one being mowing your lawn, playing baseball and even fishing. Sunday was truly the Sabbath. The churches had morning and evening services, also one on Wednesday night. This could have been because of the beginning of the war. Sunday was the

day for visiting. I don't remember Rev. Gage unfortunately but through the scouts Rev. Taylor and Rev. Mervin Campbell became good friends. Our scout meetings were Friday night in the Presbyterian Church basement, this was troop 31. This was an active organization. Then the explorer scout unit formed and the architect Dick Erskine gave us the building behind his house to use. I wasn't a charter member by two years but Frank Eggert was, also Bob Sundt who later in life moved the London Bridge to Arizona. On Saturdays once a month during the war we would go around on the borough truck picking up what was called salvage. One item was cans of cooking grease. I never could figure what this was used for.

A big event in Wenonah was the washout of the culvert in the south end of town. Labor Day weekend we had a record breaking storm. All railroad travel stopped at Wenonah because of the washout. They had a shuttle bus at Wenonah station which took the commuters to Sewell to get back on the train. Equipment arrived to erect the trestle including a crew of laborers. The work train was on the railroad siding across from the present post office. We spent hours watching the construction and out of this there was an outbreak of swearing among the kids at the school. Miss Tonkin took harsh action by expelling several of the students. I can remember all day and night you could hear the steam pile driver.

Radio programs had great importance to us. The highlight of the day was Jack Armstrong, the all American boy. We all sent in a box top and twenty five cents to get the secret decoding ring. At the end of each program they had a secret message to be decoded.

Earl Cox punched Brud Sundt in the face and to the day when Brud operated on the President of the United States, Ronald Regan, he wore the scar on his forehead of the imprint of Earl's

decoding ring. Another favorite program was the Shadow on Sunday night at seven. We were listening to the Shadow when we heard that Pearl Harbor was bombed.

A favorite place to sled was at Farr's house. We would start at the steps of the house and go down the drive and past the little pond into the woods. Also we would sled on the hill at the cemetery. Unfortunately the Lewis boy got run over by a bus there while sledding. Most people remember ice skating at Warners' and Little Lake which was a big community affair. However on our side of the tracks we used Synnot's pond. It was really two ponds and the upper one ended up in a stream which went up around the area of Jack Sheppard's house. We would take hot dogs and marshmallows to cook over the bonfire. Each night at eight o'clock the fire whistle would blow. This was sort of an unofficial curfew and at our house you had it if you weren't home.

May Veach was the postmistress and also an ardent democrat. It was a terrible affront to the good republicans in the town to walk in and face the huge picture of FDR on the wall. She even smoked cigarettes in a holder like President Roosevelt. Meade Glading was before her but he took a trip to the Federal penitentiary for absconding with funds. May Veach helped us kids with our stamp collections and she was a good friend. Mr. Carr had a mule and he would go around town and plow the sidewalks. A big thrill was to ride on the triangular wooden plow. We would take turns.

Mr. Napper ran the water works down at the lake. When he filled up the standpipe he would watch the top of the standpipe to see it overflow and then he would stop pumping. Sometimes he would get preoccupied with something else and the standpipe would overflow and if there was a wind it would be like a rain storm in the school play ground - this was one of our small thrills.

We all went to school on a bike. It would be a demeaning experience to have your parents take you to school unless it was to get you back after being suspended. Discipline was no problem in school; teachers were highly respected and were put on the same plane as your parents. Punishment was to be put in the cloak room where we would eat the paste or worse be sent to Miss Tonkin. My teachers were first grade Miss Jorden and Miss Engler, second, Ann Woolman (Sellen), third Mrs. Tucker who had to go to the hospital and we had a class trip to visit her, fourth Miss Ella Jorden, fifth was tough Mrs. Reeves. Sixth, Mrs. Long, seventh Elsie Stratton, eighth Miss Shishoff, we worked on her farm planting onions. She was probably the strongest teacher ever to be at Wenonah Grammar School. She had muscles like a weight lifter which made her a good principle.

Dr. Peters was the head of the school board. Many dogs followed the kids to school so it was the site of many famous dog fights. Everybody went home for lunch. Arbor Day was a big occasion and May Day. We had a May pole in the park, you would be dressed up either like a robin or a blue bird and we would put on a play. In second grade we had a rhythm band, I played the triangle. We made a lot of things out of paper mache. Dave Knight was our manual training teacher and we all made pump lamps. At the beginning of the war we made plane models for the Air Force for plane identification. The girls had a sewing room. Class trips included going to Glassboro Normal School to the production of Peter Pan and visiting the windmill in Pitman. These are but a few memories of growing up in a beautiful town by an appreciative person, Milton Webb.

Newsletter

Volume 7 Issue 4 April 2009

APRIL MEETING TENTATIVELY
SCHEDULED AT THE
TRAIN STATION

Dear Members,

Due to the renovation of the train station, we are tentatively planning to have our April 10 meeting there. It does not appear the contractor's work will prevent our use of the building for April. However, if there are any last minute changes, a note will be posted on the door of the train station and we will have our meeting at the Municipal Building.

Our May meeting will definitely be at the Municipal Building. And we will be having our year end picnic on June 12 at the Wenonah Lake.

Clean Communities Day will be May 2nd. If ten volunteers participate, we will qualify for the \$500 that is donated to our Society. If anyone is interested, please let me know.

The speaker for our April meeting is Stephanie Berenato. She will be discussing the program for the Founders' Day event on Saturday, April 18, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. with a rain date of Sunday, April 19. The theme of the event is "A Step Back in Time: A Celebration of Wenonah's Train Station." There will be a story time about trains for children, a presentation by Jack Sheppard, Sr., on the Trains and Origins of Wenonah, crafts for the children, model train displays of the Pennsylvania-Reading Seashore

Line, which ran through Wenonah, train memorabilia, and live music. At our meeting, we will play the trivia contest that the children at Wenonah Elementary are currently doing. Prizes will be given for the most correct answers at our meeting. HINT: Read the new book about Wenonah's history by Marjorie Lentz. All answers are found in her book which can be purchased at the Wenonah Library.

Brenda Birkland

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second Friday of each month at the
Community Center (Train Station)
except June, July and August

WENONAH ADVANCE, THE FIRST NEWSPAPER OF WENONAH

Are any of you acquainted with Lester Shoemaker of Mullica Hill? He has several fragments of the Wenonah Advance newspaper, the first newspaper of Wenonah. They contain beautiful illustrations of Wenonah and points of interest in our area. I have contacted him and he is searching among his collections for the newspapers. If any of you know him, perhaps you could encourage him in his search. Please contact me if

you can help 415-0985 or
sbbirkland@verizon.net.

DO YOU HAVE THE HISTORY OF
WENONAH BY WILLIAM
CATTELL?

William C. Cattell was a prominent citizen of Wenonah and a surveyor-engineer. His home was built in 1902 at 200 West Mantua Avenue. His map of Wenonah is our earliest complete map. He also wrote a history of Wenonah with an account of lifestyles of that period. We are not sure what form the history is in, perhaps it is only a handwritten account, perhaps it is in book or pamphlet form. Jean Ehlers referred to his written history in the Historic House Register book. Howard Hendrickson also quoted from Mr. Cattell's written history in his article entitled "History of Wenonah." Sadly, we are unable to locate his written history and are wondering if you may possess it in your collection? We would love to have a copy for our museum and membership use. It may be useful for you to know that Jean Ehlers' maternal grandmother was a Cattell.

DO YOU HAVE A HISTORIC
PLAQUE AND AN OLD PHOTO OF
YOUR HOUSE?

Frank Eggert is making a display for homes with historic plaques. The display will include the plaque, an old, original photo of the home and a current photo. If you have an old photo, please contact Frank at 468-6465. He will make a copy and return it to you.

INTERVIEW WITH MARJORIE LENTZ ABOUT HER NEW BOOK "WENONAH"
AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE AT THE WENONAH PUBLIC LIBRARY AND WHS MEETINGS

Why did you originally decide to write a book on Wenonah's history in 1976?

In planning for the Centennial celebration of our town, a committee realized there was no written history of Wenonah. I was part of that committee and I volunteered to write the book.

How did you write the first book?

I took two months off from work and totally dedicated myself to the task. Everyday, I would go to the Woodbury Courthouse and I read 100 years of the Constitution, the oldest newspaper available for our area. I brought my typewriter along everyday and I catalogued on index cards every article that had anything to do with Wenonah. I also used interviews with residents who had lived in Wenonah for many years, letters, diaries, minutes from innumerable organizations, and private conversations as source material for my book.

How did you write the second book?

First, I reread all the index cards in one lump sitting to get an overall picture of Wenonah's history. It would have been much easier to write a book with chapters labeled "The History of the Wenonah Fire Company" or the "History of the Wenonah Military Academy." But I wanted to write a book that described the history of Wenonah as it evolved so you could feel what it would be like to live in a particular period.

Second, I used new source materials such as letters, diaries etc. so the second book contains new information that was not in the first book. Also, I went back and corrected any errors that were found in the first book.

As for both the first and second book, I made sure I included little details, ones that are not necessarily of historic importance but ones that give you a feel for what it was like to live in a

period of time. For instance, Jennie Fox told me a story that when she was growing up in town, the children would follow the ice wagon around town so they could catch slivers of ice when the ice man was cutting it. There's another funny story about the boys removing the burs from the wagons in front of the Methodist church. These stories tell you what the children were doing at different periods of time.

I understand Jack Sheppard, Sr. helped you with the second book. How did you work together?

Really, the second book would not have been possible without Jack's help. He gave advice, used his computer skills and provided written material for the book, photos, and emphasized the importance of accuracy. He also wrote the afterword of the book which documents more recent history of our town.

What was one of your greatest challenges in writing the book?

Because it is a history book, it was difficult to sometimes determine the accuracy of stories, even those found in newspaper articles. Sifting through stories and written material to determine their accuracy led me down some interesting investigative paths. For instance, an oral history existed that claimed the mansion torn down by Mr. Farr where he built the Wenonah Public Library was a replica of the Hollybush mansion in Glassboro. But upon further investigation, including using the only known photograph of the mansion, which is an aerial shot, revealed they were not exact replicas, not even close. I also visited the Hollybush mansion and had lunch with the President's wife to familiarize myself with its layout.

When you were conducting research for your books, did you discover anything that surprised you?

All the prominent men of Wenonah, Synnott, Farr, Comey, Greene, and Bailey were very religious and integral to the churches here in Wenonah. I read once that Mr. Comey had a Bible class of 70 people in his boat house. George Bailey was internationally known for his Sunday School Association work. Their dedication to their faith was inspiring to me.

I also thought it was interesting how even though many of these men were from Philadelphia and quite wealthy, they seemed to happily come along with the farmers and locals who also lived in this area. George Bailey stated “we are all one happy family.” I find that remarkable.

If you could go back in time, what period of Wenonah’s history would you like to live in?

I would like to live during the period of the Wenonah Military Academy. There was so much activity in town during this time period. There were drills and parades, athletic events and dances, concerts and lectures.

What one message from your book would you like to convey to the people of Wenonah, both young and old?

The message I would like to convey is contained in my foreword. There are so many people in this town and we all have talents and skills to share for the good of our community. The original purpose of the written history, found among almost discarded papers, states it clearly “The purpose would be to share some of the enthusiasm, the love of the natural resources, the wisdom and the cultural background of the early fathers (and mothers) who dreamed of the kind of town they would want to live in themselves.”

This concludes my interview with Marjorie Lentz. If you have ideas for future newsletters, any old newspaper clippings or photos that you believe would be of interest to our membership, I would welcome your ideas. Please contact me at sbbirkland@verizon.net or 415-0985. You may also contact us at WHS, PO Box 32, Wenonah, NJ 08090.

Brenda Birkland

DID YOU KNOW:

The grist mill at Wenonah Lake was started by Abraham Dilks before the Revolutionary War.

Stephen Greene, owner of the Wenonah Inn, had a golf course laid out extending from the present Cedar Avenue ball field to the Comey Lake area in 1900.

The first improvements to the streets of Wenonah were laying down cinders from the West Jersey Railroad and oyster shells brought in from Port Norris.

The original street plan for Wenonah was created by William Fredrick Allen, Chief Engineer of the West Jersey Railroad, and father of Standard Time.

Mantua Avenue was a gravel street until 1925.

The street lights in Wenonah were gas until the 1920s.

There were 14 veterans of the Civil War living in Wenonah at the turn of the century.

Compiled by Milton Webb, October 30, 1997

Newsletter

Volume 7 Issue 5 May 2009

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT BARBARA CAPELLI

Dear Members,

Spring is here and our town is beautiful with new flowers and plantings and "How about that Train Station!" Yes, our beloved Wenonah Train Station is getting the much needed restoration and big thanks to everyone involved in that project, and there are many! I especially want to mention a recent donation for the Train Station from Eugene Cowell III in honor of his late aunt (former WHS member) Connie Cowell. This very generous donation will certainly be of great help to us in making special additions to our Train Station.

Founders Day was a huge success this year and also included many hard working volunteers. The Train Station was celebrated and everyone enjoyed a beautiful day of learning and great community socialization. Thanks again to all who participated.

We are continuing to make great progress with some new ideas for our Society. This summer we hope to have ideas for new sale items, a beginning of a website that will be included as a link to the Borough's website, new programs, and perhaps a new committee or two, so let's continue to encourage new members to join us. Also of note, we want to encourage anyone who has memorabilia. We would graciously accept anything of historic value regarding Wenonah. Just recently, I received a 1920's Wenonah Military Academy yearbook from Richard Paulus whose father attended the academy! It's in pretty rough

condition but it is a super donation for our museum.

This Friday, we will have the pleasure of having Jeanne Brody as our guest speaker. She is an adjunct professor at Villanova and St. Joseph's University where she teaches Art History. She is going to speak about History through Prints, and how printmaking has been used historically to spread ideas, propaganda, and counter-government ideas.

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If anyone has old prints or even old cartoons or political imagery she would be glad to reference them. Please feel free to bring your old prints for sharing!

Also of note, don't forget our June Picnic is at the Wenonah Lake...no bathing suits yet please!! See Pat Sole to sign up to make your favorite dish!

I hope to see you all Friday! And don't forget we are meeting at the Municipal Building!

Barb Capelli

GLOUCESTER DEMOCRAT APRIL 20, 1893

The erection of the Wenonah Inn was one of the conditions under which the West Jersey railroad are erecting a handsome railroad station on the east side of the tracks. The new building is constructed of rough-faced Eastern hydraulic brick, which gives it the appearance of a finely chizzled [sic] stone structure.

GLOUCESTER DEMOCRAT DECEMBER 7 1893

The real beauty of our little station is more highly appreciated these cold wintry months. To the early birds especially, the bright cheery waiting room presents a most attractive appearance. The building of the station master's house in connection with the office is a great improvement also making it not only more convenient for this official, but giving him a better opportunity of fulfilling the duties of his position.

STATION REHAB PROGRESS

As many of you have no doubt noted while driving by, the station is a mess. Don't despair, it will get better, just wait a little while. The interior is stripped down to the bare plaster and painting is about to commence. Outside the old overgrown trees and shrubs have been removed and a brick plaza with plantings is about to be created. We are now trying to determine a color scheme for the exterior and the architect Margaret Westfield is trying to identify the original colors from when new in 1893. When finished our much used building should be useful for another generation or two.

INTERVIEW WITH JACK SHEPPARD, SR., ABOUT HIS ROLE IN THE PUBLICATION OF MARJORIE LENTZ'S NEW BOOK "WENONAH"

Marjorie stated her new book would not have been possible without you. What type of assistance did you provide?

Marjorie is too modest. I mainly provided technical assistance with word processing and photos and an index for the new book which was lacking in the original. I encouraged her to write the second book since she had additional material that wasn't included in her first book. It was enjoyable working with Marjorie and comparing notes on Wenonah history.

How did you become so interested in Wenonah's history?

In 1982, Jane Ramsey, Marjorie Lentz, Jack and Jean Ehlers and others came to council and asked permission to create an archives committee. Out of this committee, the Wenonah Historical Society was formed. While planning for the 1976 bicentennial celebration Marjorie was asked to write a book about the town's origins. Her book made me realize how little I knew about the early days of Wenonah. I was amazed how interesting our history is.

If you could go back in time, what period of Wenonah's history would you like to live in?

I would like to visit any period of time prior to 2001. I would love to sit on the porch of the Wenonah House in 1872 and watch the guests arriving from Philadelphia. I would like to be at Noblitts Hall and watch the beginnings of the first Wenonah School. I would love to attend the opening day of our train station built in 1893 and certainly all the activity surrounding the Wenonah Military Academy would be thrilling to watch.

Some people new to town may not realize you served as Mayor of Wenonah for 24 years, which is the longest time any single Mayor has served. In your lifetime as a Wenonah resident, what have been your fondest memories?

My fondest memories are related to my children and their activities, and to the many

benefits of living in a small town and having involvement and friendships with people. We are a close knit community and there are many clubs and organizations for one to be involved in such as the Lions Club, Athletic Association, the Home and School, Wenonah Swim Club and Warner's Lake, the Fire Company. Volunteerism really shines in a small town. The push by Governor Corzine to merge services among municipalities is concerning to me as I believe our quality of services will decline and we could lose our small town identity.

You also wrote a book with highlights from Borough Council minutes. What was the genesis of that book?

Thomas Synnott III, grandson of one of Wenonah's original residents, found in the Synnott mansion old borough records dating to 1871, the time of Wenonah's creation. He invited me to visit his home to view those records. I spent many Sunday afternoons reviewing the material, ultimately using much of the information in a book as a fundraiser for the Historical Society.

While reading the old minutes, did you discover anything about the town that surprised you?

I was surprised that the Borough government had little contact with the Wenonah Military Academy. There was virtually nothing in the records about the relationship of the borough to the Academy. After 1935 when the Academy was closed, the minutes did mention that our building inspector Tom Carlson determined the building to be a fire hazard and recommended it be demolished. At the time, the Academy was still owned by the Estate of Stephen Greene, the entity that owned it. There is no information about the Borough contacting the Greene Estate before it was torn down.

I was also surprised about the huge part the West Jersey Railroad Company (WJRC) played in founding the town. In 1861 the narrow-gauge tracks that ended in Mantua were straightened, replaced with the more universal standard gauge

tracks and extended to Glassboro. WJRC Vice President William Sewell and his Chief Engineer William Allen apparently seeing the beauty of the area decided a town at this location would increase ridership for the rail company. They convinced investors of the benefits, created the Mantua Land and Improvement Company to do the selling, built a hotel and a town was born.

While you were reviewing the minutes, I understand you found the deed for the train station land that allowed you and council to stop the sale of the train station to a private party in 1973. Tell me about the timing of this.

In 1973 I learned the Pennsylvania-Reading railroad company had sold our train station to a private party. I don't know whether it was pure coincidence or just plain good luck but at almost the same time while viewing the old Synnot records I found a deed noting the land given to the railroad by the Borough Commissioners was granted with a condition: the land was to be used "for passenger station purposes only." Borough Council contested the sale in Superior Court and the land reverted to Borough ownership. Council then purchased the building for \$3,000.

Volunteers refurbished the train station for use as a Community Center for Wenonah citizens. What was the refurbishment project like?

The project was so much fun. Kids, parents and grandparents all worked together on this project. Dave Miller headed a committee of volunteers and we had people in town donate their skills, time and money. Local professionals also volunteered. We repaired plaster, put on a new roof, planted and painted. We even had T-shirts with the slogan "I'VE BEEN WORKING ON THE RAILROAD." This project was another great example of small town living and volunteerism.

As we sit here looking at the current renovation of the train station, how does that make you feel?

Wenonah is one of the few towns along the track that has successfully maintained its historic

train station for community use. It is truly an accomplishment and I am so pleased to see its current renovation underway. I am extremely grateful to former Borough Administrator Dawn Human for her success in acquiring this grant and to Dave Kreck for all his expert efforts as Borough Engineer to ensure satisfactory completion.

What do you feel was your most significant achievement while Mayor?

Because Wenonah is such a small town I felt it was important to be connected to the region outside the town to ensure our voice was heard. When the county wanted to create a county-wide sewer system I volunteered to spearhead the project mainly to assure Wenonah wasn't damaged by the process. The project took four years and involved the 13 most populated communities in the county. As a result we were able to close our sewage treatment plant that existed at what is now Lisle Field, and the previously frequent Oak Valley sewage plant overflows no longer affect Wenonah Lake.

What one message would you like to convey to the people of Wenonah, both young and old?

Wenonah is a wonderful place to live and in which to raise a family but its future well-being could be in jeopardy if plans to place passenger service back on the tracks through Wenonah are carried forward. Such a project would be devastating from a construction standpoint. Whether placed below grade in a pit or raised high in the air the increased width of the right-of-way would severely impact our new borough hall or the train station or both. The resulting barrier of pit or elevated structure would be an eyesore that would devalue a significant amount of our beautiful housing stock. With no room for parking space we would not even have access to the train but would have to drive to a "park & ride" facility somewhere else in the region. Suffice it to say the most recent professional study of the proposal resulted in a recommendation against putting trains back on these ill-suited old tracks.

Newsletter

Volume 7 Issue 6 June 2009

A MESSAGE FROM THE
PRESIDENT AND VICE
PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

As our program for the year comes to a close, we would like to thank everyone for their work throughout this past year. Our organization relies on you and we could not operate without your many contributions. For fear of forgetting someone, we will not try to name everyone but know we appreciate what you do! As we think back over the year, there are two accomplishments we are especially proud of and want to highlight: we are so excited to have the new Wenonah book published and we are so pleased to see the train station being rehabilitated!

We wish you a very special summer filled with relaxation and fun activities but also good times with family and friends. If over the summer you have ideas for new programs or activities, we would love to hear from you. Feel free to contact one of the officers.

We hope you can join us for the picnic at Wenonah Lake on Friday, June 12, at 5:00 p.m. Please contact us if you'd like to come. We are asking everyone to bring an item to share for eight.

Again, have a great summer!

Brenda Birkland and Barb Capelli

STATION REHAB PROGRESS

For various reasons, it does not appear the train station will be complete by July 4th. Many of the steel columns that hold the roof of the platform were almost completely rusted through at the base. It is amazing the roof had not collapsed. The plan is to weld new steel patches in these areas rather than replacing the entire column, which is cost prohibitive.

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The exterior color selection was made and it was decided to go with the original color scheme in 1893 as found by architect Margaret Westfield. The colors will be a dark green on the trim and doors and a light grey/green on the stucco.

The brick pavers for the plaza will be installed soon and this should soften the appearance of the concrete area recently poured.

There are also shrubbery beds planned in several rectangular areas and this will soften the appearance of the hardscaping. You may ask why so much hardscaping? The Borough plans to relocate the annual Christmas tree lighting from the park to the station plaza and to use the plaza for future community events as well.

GLOUCESTER DEMOCRAT
APRIL 20, 1893

The erection of the Wenonah Inn was one of the conditions under which the West Jersey railroad are erecting a handsome railroad station on the east side of the tracks. The new building is constructed of rough-faced Eastern hydraulic brick, which gives it the appearance of a finely chizzled [sic] stone structure.

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generation or two.

Newsletter

Volume 7 Issue 8 November 2009

TRAIN STATION UPDATE

The train station/Community Center restoration project is finished at last and we have a green light from engineer Dave Kreck and architect Margaret Westfield to start using the building for meetings. We have received nothing yet from Borough Council. I have to say it looks great both inside and out (except for the kitchen) and should continue to benefit Wenonah far into the future. However there is a lot of work needing to be performed before that can happen. Most of the furniture that stayed in the building such as the meeting tables, solid leg chairs, the long fold-up tables, etc. are dusty and dirty requiring a wash and wipe before they can be used. All of the folding chairs used for meetings are in the storage pod in the parking lot. Unfortunately they are behind everything else. That is also where the clocks, the huge wall hanging with the eagle and the rest of the plaques and photographs are stored.

The only restoration performed in the kitchen is new linoleum floor covering. The kitchen is extremely dirty needing a scrubbing before it can be used. The counter-top is badly beat up and needs to be replaced. What we need quickly is a survey and list of tasks needing to be done. We will then seek volunteers for

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a few hours of work. I will check with Borough officials to see if there is any possibility of assistance with moving heavy material and with kitchen improvement. Jack Sheppard Sr.

CHRISTMAS PARTY REGISTRATION DUE AT NOVEMBER MEETING

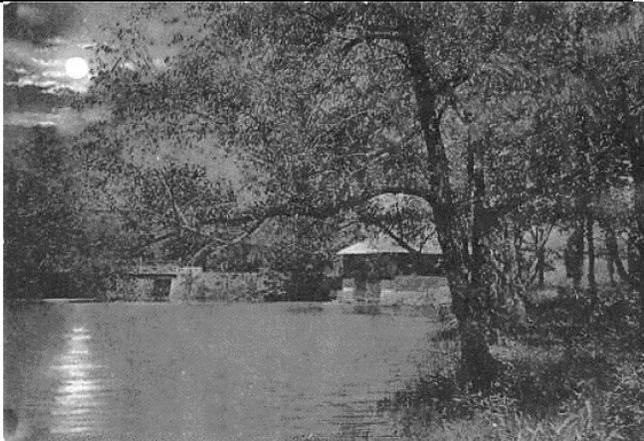
Our annual Christmas party is December 11 at the train

station. and will be catered by Telford Inn. The menu is turkey, dressing and all the accompaniments. The cost is \$20 a person and needs to be paid at the November meeting to reserve your spot. If you can't make it to the meeting, please give Pat Sole a call and drop your check off to her no later no Monday, November 16. We will also have our usual polly anna exchange. If you'd like to participate, please bring your unwrapped gift costing around \$10. The time for the party is 5:00 p.m. for greeting and 6:00 p.m. for dinner. Thank you to Pat Sole for arranging.

TRAIN PRESENTATION AT OUR NEXT MEETING

At our November meeting, Lou McCall will present information about the Wenonah Train Station and recap his presentation from this past Founders' Day. There may be a few other surprises related to the train station so we hope to see you at our newly restored train station. Brenda Birkland

**"THINGS THAT AREN'T HERE ANYMORE"
WHAT LAKE WAS IT? WHERE WAS IT?**



This photograph is a postcard entitled "Moonlight on Lake Cornelia, Wenonah, NJ." The lake was also known as Greene's Lake and it was located at the end of South Clinton Avenue. It was part of the Stephen Greene estate and included a carriage road over the dam with a Japanese designed bridge and a two story boat house, both visible in the postcard above. Why was it called "Lake Cornelia?" Stephen Greene's caretaker, John Truncer, had a wife named Cornelia and this is the origin of the name. Stephen Greene's estate included his residence and multiple dwellings for his caretakers, as well as a barn and stables occupying a block long complex on S. Clinton Avenue. He also built a gazebo for his Dutch garden and a peacock house with a brick wall mortared with flecks of oyster shells bordering his peacock run (portions of the brick wall still exist). A Japanese gardener cared for the gardens and his greenhouses. Arbored walks from his rose gardens led to a glen known as the Hermitage. Stephen Greene was a wealthy Philadelphian who made his fortune in the printing industry. He played a great part in the development of Wenonah. His involvement in the purchase of the Wenonah Hotel in 1892, which became the Wenonah Military Academy, probably assisted the town in surviving the great depression of the late 1920s and early 1930s.

**WENONAH 100 YEARS AGO
MAY 1909 (CONT.)**

At the rate our City Fathers are spending money, our tax rate will be \$2.50 next year. O, never mind it is not their money. (There was a feeling that a dozen axes and two hose carts afforded adequate fire protection for the community.)

While swimming yesterday in Synnot's Pond, Arthur HOLETON dove and struck his arm on the bottom and broke it. Dr. Stout was called and his arm was set. (He was killed in World War 1 and our local Legion Post 192 is named after him.)

Architect Charles Peddle of Woodbury awarded the contract for the stable and garage for Edward Grosscup to John L. Drummer. It will cost \$3,500. (This is the former Oscar Redrow-Harris Cotton property. Hopefully the new owner will restore this historically significant structure.)

Miss Henrietta Comey and Miss Fanonda Lorence entertained at cards yesterday followed by a luncheon at Comey's boat house.

The boat "Wenonah" was launched here yesterday morning by Porch Brothers, who built it. The craft was christened by Mrs. E. Porch of Mantua. (The "Wenonah" was a canoe.)

Housel and Bird, the Academy's star runners, covered themselves with glory, winning their races at Rutgers College meet at New Brunswick on Saturday and winning at the Boy's Club A.A.U. meet yesterday.

Woodbury Daily Times

**WENONAH 100 YEARS AGO
NOVEMBER 1909**

Fair in the lecture room of the Presbyterian Church, November 4th Fancywork, groceries, candy, homemade bread and cake. Supper 35 cents.

Wonder whom the two young ladies were who got bewildered on the road between Cooper's Hill and Wenonah.

The River and Harbor Committee met at Hohlweg's Hotel (now Telford Inn) yesterday to determine whether to have the Mantua Creek dug out. Several appeared before the committee urging the creek be opened up to the Wenonah Bridge.

A workman in the employ of the gas company was knocked unconscious here yesterday by the bursting of a gas pipe. He was taken home in serious condition. No one would have thought there was so much force in the pipes.

In order to make an equitable charge for water to all customers, the Wenonah Water Company will place water meters on the premises of all water takers. The installing of the meters will be done during the present month and the meter rates will commence January 1st, 1910.

The Women's Christian Temperance Union held their business meeting and finding out that they had money immediately proceeded to spend it. It was voted to offer a prize of \$5.00 to the Wenonah Military Academy and \$5.00 to our public school for the best scientific temperance essay.

Bryn Athyn and Wenonah Military Academy played a tie game on Bryn Athyn grounds Saturday, neither team being able to score. The game was fast and clean throughout.

Call at the public library and look over the latest books. (The library was in the former Presbyterian Church Chapel which was moved from North Clinton Avenue to West Mantua Avenue in the first block.)

The Wenonah Mutual Improvement Association will place three carloads of manure on the lawn of the park. (This is one way to get people's attention to the park.)

There was a fire last night at the M.E. parsonage on Willow Street, and but for its timely discovery the parsonage would have been burned down. Miss Cornelia Truncer saw a light in the third story of the building and concluded at once that there was something wrong. She went to the parsonage and asked if there was anyone in the third floor with a lamp. She was told there was not, and upon investigation it was found that a box of papers was on fire. A bucket brigade was formed and the blaze was soon subdued. The Fire Company did not go into service. Just how the fire started is a mystery, but it might be the old story of mice and matches. Pastor Senser worked like a beaver in carrying buckets of water up the stairs and he thinks that his heart is all right or he could never have stood it.

Mr. Thomas W. Synnott will lead the prayer meeting this evening at the Memorial Presbyterian Church. (Mr. Synnott was one of the founders of the town and at this period had land holdings of almost one fourth of the total area of the town.)

Lost, strayed or stolen - one black and white hound dog, black face. Answers to the name "Doc" John T. Moore

The question, which is puzzling our gunners, is where to gun on Monday, when the rabbit season opens. In almost every direction one looks in the country his eyes behold a notice, which forbids gunning on the premises.

An exciting runaway occurred here last evening. A farmer drove into town to meet the train, and his horse was frightened and ran up the street east of the depot and down the embankment north of the station where it meet an express train and turned off the track at the flag house completely circling the depot. No damage was done, but how the horse missed the third rail is a mystery. It also had a narrow escape from the express train.

The machine pipeline digger of the Pitman Gas Company is digging a trench from the Wenonah Bridge to Woodbury Heights. This will give gas to all the farmers along the line.

Quite a number of our young matrons have enrolled themselves as students in the "Domestic Science Class" recently organized.

Mrs. McGill's house looks well with its new coat of paint. (N.E. corner of Clinton and Cherry Streets -The Thompson's house, formerly the Magarelli's home.)

Our Improvement Association has two classes of members, those who contribute money and those who contribute advice as to how it should be spent. These latter are mostly knockers and are a hindrance to the growth of the town.

Woodbury Heights is improving rapidly notwithstanding its lack of electric lights, sewer, artesian water, library, fire company, and church and school facilities such as Wenonah has.

A little girl visiting barber Fisher's was badly cut about the head Saturday by a flowerpot. The flowerpot was in the second story window and fell on the little girls head.

We see the hurdles have disappeared in the park and hope they will not come back. (People had been making their own paths through the park.)

Woodbury Daily Times

Newsletter

Volume 7 Issue 9 December 2009

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE WHS OFFICERS

The WHS officers would like to wish everyone a healthy and happy holiday season. As we look forward to 2010, our thoughts and prayers go out to our troops who so bravely serve our great country.

We also want to thank everyone for the time and effort they dedicated this past year in helping the Wenonah Historical Society. At this time, we would be remiss if we did not specifically mention the dedication and persistence of Jack Sheppard Sr. in overseeing the train station restoration project. His insights and hard work are a great asset to our organization and we deeply appreciate the many hours he dedicated to the project. Please be sure to walk by the newly restored train station. The kiosk will be undergoing some improvements as a Lions Club project. It is wonderful to have this historic landmark available for all of us to enjoy.

Barbara, Brenda, Vicki and Carol

TRAIN STATION COMPLETE – REQUEST FOR HISTORICAL ITEMS ABOUT WENONAH

The train station restoration is complete and we can resume the creation of the

“Wenonah Museum.” For those who haven’t visited the building, there are visible changes inside including new paint and restoration of the interior woodwork, and best of all, a new carpet. There were many beneficial repairs both inside and out. One thing we learned was that the passenger platform roof was in danger of collapse due to the supporting wrought iron

future we will commence requesting contributions of historic artifacts, photos, writings, and news articles, anything having to do with Wenonah history. So search your attics, basements and garages, and if you have anything of interest concerning Wenonah please let us know so we can provide a place for it.

Jack Sheppard Sr.

WHS OFFICERS 2009

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

Meetings are held the second Friday of each month at the Community Center (Train Station) except June, July and August

columns being almost completely eaten away by corrosion. Also of great benefit, the gable-end stucco and “half-timbering” woodwork has been fully repaired and restored to weather-tight condition. The badly deteriorated storm sashes have been replaced and many of the doors adjusted to work properly. The brickwork has been cleaned and repointed. All in all the building is now in sound condition and can be expected to serve Wenonah for many more years. In the not too distant

FRIENDS OF WENONAH TRAIN STATION

At our last meeting, we voted to approve Charlie Horan and Barbara Conway as chairpersons for a committee called the “Friends of Wenonah Train Station.” Charlie and Barbara will spearhead continued improvements to the building as well as ensure its upkeep by the organizations using the train station. Any suggestions may be forwarded to them or any of the WHS officers. We welcome your comments.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

We would like to welcome the following new members since September: Marcy Ireland, John and Laura Murphy, Nicole Odenbrett, Anna Marie Goldy, Hugh Luck, and Marie and Chris Lanzalotti.

**WENONAH 100 YEARS AGO
DECEMBER 1909**

The progress and enterprise of this place demand greater conveniences and facilities in the news line, and the management of the Times has decided to meet this demand, and will begin today serving the readers by carriers, instead of through the mail. Arrangements have been made to have all the latest news of the place published and our people will appreciate the effort. (Previous to this there was no Wenonah column, therefore our publication was "Wenonah 90 years ago.")

F. J. Savage is taking orders for Christmas trees, greens, etc.

Our people are very much pleased with the extra noon mail lately put on. (The mail was sorted and delivered on the railroad.)

The thermometer registered 23 degrees this morning. This kind of weather will soon make skating good. Twelve more days and we will have to write 1910.

The "Something New Under the Sun" laundry runs a wagon through here now.

Lowell Ridgeway with Turner and McCormick had the misfortune to burst a finger on his right hand this morning while handling a barrel of apples. It pains him very much.

The question of safety gates or a watchman all year round at the railroad crossing on Mantua Avenue is being agitated again. It is believed the company will grant the request of the citizens. (There was a watchman during the summer months when the Cape May Flier would go through town at sixty miles per hour.) James B. Robenson, of this place, has been granted an original pension of \$6 a month.

IT IS NOT TOO LATE BUT YOU HAD BETTER HURRY AND LEAVE YOUR ORDER FOR A TURKEY WITH Turner & McCormick, Wenonah (Many years later a similar sign read "now is the time to talk turkey with Tony")

James Moore, near this place, had a homing pigeon to come home yesterday that had been away for a year.

It seems that the scarcity of barbers compels some of our young men to raise moustaches-they think.

H. S. Leap has a sale of his farming implements etc, today, previous to retiring from farming and taking up his residence in Mantua.

Numbers of Christmas shoppers are traveling city ward yet.

Operator Bossier has a very peculiar break in one of the depot windows to remind him how close a shave he had from a pebble picked up by an express some time ago and thrown violently against the window. A perfectly round hole was broken in the window. For a long time many thought it had been cut with a diamond by burglars. (He was the telegraph operator at the train depot.)

Our town is filling up with Christmas visitors.

Here we are. We now have our stock of Christmas goods in apples, oranges, dates, white grapes, bananas, fine layer raisins, citron, lemon and orange peel, finest Jersey celery, lettuce, spinach, and a variety of fresh confectionery-Richard J. Clark (This building is now Mary Kaye-3 East Mantua Avenue.)

A. DeSanno has made his son George a Christmas present of a handsome bicycle.

While the team of Ellison Turner was standing hitched in front of R. J. Clark's this morning, the horse became frightened, and in its struggle to free itself, broke both shafts from the wagon, Mr. Clark loaned Mr. Turner another wagon to get home.

The Christmas festival by the Presbyterian Sunday school, in Noblitt's Hall last night, was a decided success, and much credit is due the superintendent who furnished the entire entertainment. Prof. Hoy with his marionettes

greatly entertained the little folks and Mr. Herbert Lloyd with his solos and character sketches came in for a goodly share of the applause. The hall was densely packed and there was scarcely standing room. A feature of the program was the presentation of a handsome cane to the Superintendent Wilkins from his class by Ex-mayor Andrew W. Carey.

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**GROUCHO MARX
IN WENONAH IN 1934**

Remember the list of famous people who have visited Wenonah over the years in Marjorie Lentz's History of Wenonah book? I recently ran across an original source document describing Groucho Marx's visit to Wenonah. You will note his sister-in-law lived in town at 4 East Willow Street, now the home of Ann and Nick Godsey. I hope you'll enjoy this article from the Evening News, April 12, 1934. There are interesting historic parallels to our current economic recovery in the article.

**GROUCHO MARX DECLARES
CRANKY BANKERS A SURE SIGN
OF U.S. RECOVERY**
PATIENT ALWAYS CRANKY WHEN
RECOVERING, FAMED COMEDIAN SAYS;
SPENDS FEW DAYS WITH SISTER-IN-LAW
AT WENONAH HOME; WIFE AND
CHILDREN WITH HIM IN REST PERIOD
BEFORE NEW SHOW; ADMITS DISLIKE
FOR WORK

Wenonah, April 12 -This small, quiet residential town entertained royalty yesterday afternoon and last night and it seemed that fully half the population turned out to see him sign his name and to settle the age-old question: "Is that moustache real?"

The Person of royal lineage was none other than the President of Fredonia. In the event you're not a movie fan, this personage is Groucho Marx,

of the famed Marx Brothers of stage, screen and radio fame.

Marx, with his wife Ruth, and two children, Miriam, 6, and Arthur, 12, are visiting Mrs. Marx's sister Mrs. Lester Russell, of 4 East Willow Street. Or rather, they're there with practically everybody else in town - or at least so it seemed last night when interviewers arrived upon the scene.

The comedian talked of the stage, the screen and radio; discussed the depression, the recovery movement, the prospects of unknowns in the theatrical venture and revealed why the famed moustache was painted and not real.

Something To Laugh At

In discussing the depression, Marx said: "Without something to laugh at during the past two or three years, people would have committed suicide. It seems to me that comedy has a very definite place in the world today, as it always has, and that place is the stop-gap, or safety valve between a complete collapse of the nervous system and enjoyment of life."

"Tell me," pleaded an interviewer, "how do you try out your gags? On your wife?"

"Not any more," was the reply, as Groucho looked sidewise at Mrs. Marx, seated on a nearby davenport. "I once did, but I found out a paying audience was more responsive. Even a wife gets tired of a comedian's jokes.

"The best place and, to me, the only place to try out gags is on the stage. There you get instantaneous response."

Much In Luck

A youthful interviewer asked what the chances were for an unknown to break into the theatrical set-up. "How good is your luck?" Groucho asked.

"Getting anywhere in this business is about 25 percent ability and 75 percent luck. If you don't get the breaks, you'll stay in Uncle Tom's Cabin road shows for the rest of your life." He cited the instance of one film comedian of middle age who for many years played minor roles on the stage until finally given the role of a comic undertaker. The play was later filmed and he again got his

same role. It made him and today he is to be seen
in many pictures. (to be continued next month)