

# Newsletter

Volume 4 Issue 9 November 2006

MESSAGE FROM  
PRESIDENT DON RALSTON

Dear Members;

The holiday season is approaching with Thanksgiving Day Thursday November 23rd and of course Christmas December 25th. This will be a very busy time for all of our members.

Prior to those dates an important event will take place on Election Day, Tuesday November 7, 2006. We should all exercise our special right of franchise, voting, granted to us by our founding fathers.

A little bit of history about Wenonah. I have been told this is the first time we have had a contest for the office of mayor. Of course in the past there have been many contests for council seats. This is a great thing for democracy.

Besides the general and local elections our own Historical Society will be nominating a slate of officers for the next two years starting January 2007. All members are urged to attend this November meeting as nominations can be made from the floor.

If you have driven about our town you have seen the beautiful change of color in our trees, especially the view at Warner's Lake.

There will not be a specific planned program for this meeting. If any member would like to present a remembrance of Wenonah of some historical fact we will like to hear it.

The Arthur J. Holeton Post #192 is sponsoring a Veterans Day Dinner at Oak Valley Caterers November 11th Veteran's Day, once known as Armistice Day, the date when the first World War ended. If any person wishes to attend contact Doug Gehring 468-2255 or Joe Schultes at 468-5241. This year we will be honoring the U.S. Coast Guard.

Dues for 2007 will be due January 1, 2007. Jean Cowles is membership chairperson. She can be reached at 468-6031. Our post office box is # 32 should you wish to mail your dues.

### WHS OFFICERS 2006

<b>President</b>	<b>Don Ralston</b>
<b>Vice Pres.</b>	<b>Jack Sheppard Sr.</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Jo Dominy</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Carol Wiltsee</b>
<b>Corr. Sec.</b>	<b>Betty MacLeod</b>
<b>Trustee</b>	<b>Vicki McCall</b>
<b>Trustee</b>	<b>Lucy Schulz</b>

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

We invite non-members and new people in town to join our organization.

The December meeting will be our annual Christmas Party. Pat Sole is once again chairing the committee. Her telephone # is 468-6661. Further notice of details will be forthcoming.

We wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving! Thank you for your support of the Wenonah Historical Society.

### WHS MUSEUM PROJECT

As mentioned in the last issue of our newsletter progress on our museum is being made, although slower than I had originally anticipated. Right now we continue the cataloguing, photographing and entering the materials in the computer. This is being done by Julie Ream and her volunteers.

The project I have undertaken is to determine how many of the paper plans and other documents have historical value and how to identify and store them for future retrieval. One of the problems with this process is that most of the objects are tightly coiled and resist being flattened. Many of them are old and brittle, very difficult to work with.

One item of interest is the original plan for the layout of the northeast section of Wenonah that unfortunately was not implemented.

J.C. Sheppard Sr.

### HISTORICAL TIDBITS

The Wenonah House was opened for guests in the spring of 1872. The forty-room hotel rose three stories and was crowned by a square cupola. Iron Doric columns reaching all the way to the roof surrounded three sides of the hotel and a veranda twelve feet wide provided space for promenades. From the veranda guests could stroll across South Clinton Avenue to an open space being developed into parks divided by a lane. Running water and gas were installed in every room and, according to a newspaper article; it was "furnished in elegant style."

# Wenonah House Hotel and Inn 1872 - 1903

Compiled by J. Sheppard Sr.

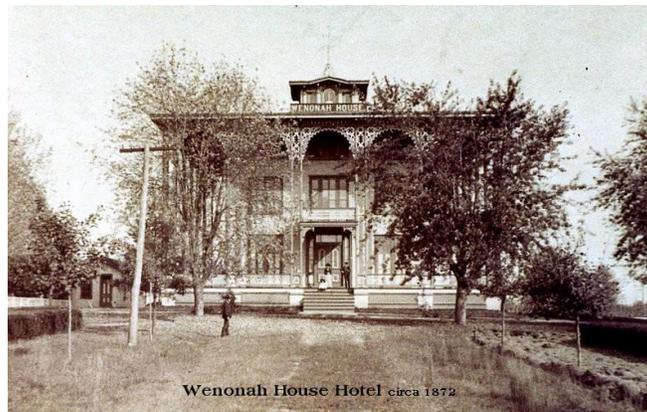
*Constitution* Newspaper Nov 29, 1871 Under the management of the skilful engineer of the West Jersey Railroad, Mr. W.F. Alien, this beautifully laid but village begins to assume shapes and proportions highly flattering to the West Jersey Railroad Company. Avenues have been opened, shade trees planted and the grading of the streets placed in the hands of competent workmen. Although a newly started village, some ten or fifteen beautiful cottages and mansions have already gone up. The hotel is a beautiful structure, and shows at once the spirit of the men having the place in charge. It was built by Harden & Brother of Camden. The beauty of the site, healthiness of the location and nearness to the city make Wenonah certain of receiving many who seek retirement for the Summer and a home in the country and at the same time a place in daily contiguity with the city. Another year will place Wenonah on a footing, from the cheapness of the land or advantages offered, with the oldest villages in the state. Factories are being talked of and soon we may expect to see a population of 500 to 1,000 people.

*Constitution* January 6, 1886 "A Sad Ending of life". On Tuesday afternoon of last week the dead body of Isaac Newton was found in a room at the Avenue Hotel on Delaware Ave., Philadelphia. In a cup on the washstand were the dregs of a dose of poison. His outer clothing was removed and carefully folded and laid on another bed in the room, while an unsealed letter addressed to his brother was found on the windowsill. In the letter he said: "For God's sake, bury me in the same grave with my wife. I have done this because life has been full of trouble since her death. I commit the children to your care." He went to the hotel on Monday, and after eating a meal picked out a room which suited him and retired early. As he gave no instructions about being called he was not disturbed until noon following when the door was forced open. He had evidently been dead several hours. Isaac Newton was well known in this county having been

proprietor of the Wenonah House and Mantua Hotel for years. He was of genial disposition and made many friends. Since the death of his wife, which occurred about three months ago, he had been very despondent.

Editorial Comment: For many years following the opening of the Wenonah House the proprietors were Isaac and Mahlon Newton. Of course the name Newton was connected to the Newton Hotel in Woodbury. In Wenonah the Isaac Newton's, husband and wife were responsible for arranging many of the affairs and revelry that took place during the summer seasons. Reference to them occurs frequently in the Wenonah news sections of the local newspapers. I have no way of knowing how Isaac and Mahlon were related. Perhaps a reader might have that knowledge.

*Constitution* August 10, 1887 On Thursday



Wenonah House Hotel circa 1872

last a private car was attached to the excursion train on the West Jersey Railroad and forty seven guests of the Wenonah House went to Atlantic City and passed a pleasant day in bathing, sailing and fishing. On their return to Wenonah they found the hotel illuminated with Chinese lanterns and a choice supper awaiting them. Mr. Newton, the proprietor, understands how to make things pleasant for his guests and his efforts are thoroughly appreciated. The fact that the excursionists were all acquainted with one another added to the enjoyment of the trip to Atlantic City.

*Glouco Democrat* March 20, 1893 This beautiful residence borough is now taking Its longest stride forward. New buildings are being erected of a character that give the town an air of stability and thrift, possessed by new suburban places, and the borough authorities are evincing a public spirit in keeping with period, by the introduction of a complete system of sewerage, insuring to the people surroundings that shall be as healthful as the borough is beautiful.

The Wenonah Inn Company, of which Stephen Greene, Dr. Geo. W. Bailey, Dr. Wm. Greene, Chas.

M. Wilkins, T. W. Synnott, Isaac Stevenson, J. Frank Shull are Directors, and of which Stephen Greene, is President; Dr. Geo. W. Bailey, Vice President; Dr. Wm. Greene, Treasurer, is just completing a magnificent hotel, designed to accommodate 150 guests. The house and furniture will cost at least \$70,000, and be completed in time for this season's business. The erection of this hotel was one of the conditions under which the West Jersey railroad is erecting a handsome railroad station on the east side of the tracks, immediately opposite the old station. The new building is constructed of rough-faced eastern hydraulic brick, which gives it the appearance of a finely chizzled [sic] stone structure.

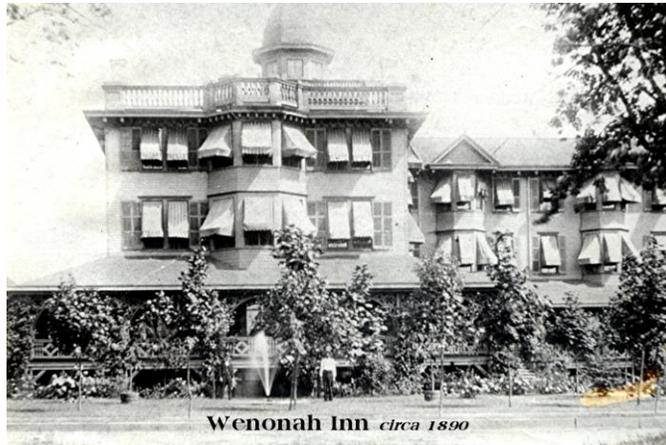
Another evidence of the broad and liberal platform on which the borough of Wenonah is constructed is, that in public affairs, politics is eschued [sic] and public servants are chosen on the basis of fitness. At the Borough election last Wednesday, Blair Smith and Ed. E. Grosscup, Democrats, were elected Commissioners for three years, and Richard Ballinger, for one year, to fill the unexpired term of H.C. Hess. The Board of Commissioners organized by electing Mr. T. W. Synnott, President. Stated meetings are held on the last Friday evening of each month, and at the next meeting the President will announce the Committees.

Real estate has had a boon here the past week and this is only a forerunner of what is to follow. Mr. R. J. Clark has bought back from Jesse English the store property for \$8,000, the price of the stock is to be fixed by an appraisal. Blair Smith bought four houses of the Horatio Mulford estate, and has already sold one of them..

*Glouco Democrat* July 6, 1891 It is reported on good authority that the "Wenonah House" formerly owned by Charles Middleton is now owned by a syndicate of three, viz: Stephen Green, T.W. Synnott and Dr. Geo. Bailey. Some think it will be converted into a home for invalids, but we can't tell, you know.

*Glouco Democrat* September 28, 1892 The project for a large new hotel is now fairly started, a large part of the excavation for the cellar having been made, and the stone masons are at work on the foundations walls.

*Constitution* August 16, 1893 There is nothing being left undone to make the "Wenonah Inn" the finest country hostelry in the State. The appointments, conveniences and accommodations will be the best. A splendidly sufficient supply of water has been secured; the electrical apparatus is of the latest design; the plumbing, always one of the most important in a public house, has been put into the most competent hands, while the drainage and sewerage system is according to the best regulations of sanitarians; 8 inch drain pipes are now being laid from the house to a lot on the creek banks, a distance of near half a mile. The cost of the improvements and the furnishings will exceed \$70,000.



*Constitution* April 12, 1894 The building being erected

for the servants quarters of the Wenonah Inn is rapidly nearing completion.

*Constitution* May 30, 1894 The bowling alley at the Inn is nearly completed; the billiard room in the basement was opened on Saturday night.

*Constitution* June 19, 1872 A windmill is being erected on the Wenonah House to pump water into the large tank upon its roof.

*Constitution* December 16, 1903 In line with other extensive improvements going on at the Inn, Stephen Greene has had architects down drawing plans for remodeling the first floor, and making other interior changes. A feature of the improvements will be a swimming pool on the spacious grounds. One of the best seasons for this well-known house is anticipated next year.

A great many people were surprised when on September 20, 1904 the Inn building opened under a new name - The Wenonah Military Academy.

WENONAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY



PO Box 32  
Wenonah, New Jersey 08090

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# WENONAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2006

### Membership Benefits

- MONTHLY NEWSLETTER MAILED TO YOUR HOME
- MONTHLY MEETINGS WITH INTERESTING PROGRAMS
- ACCESS TO HISTORICAL ARCHIVES AND MEMORABILIA
- A NUMBER OF KNOWLEDGEABLE WENONAHIANS

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

AMOUNT PAID \$ \_\_\_\_\_

CHECK \_\_\_\_\_ CASH \_\_\_\_\_

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

DUES: \$15.00 PER FAMILY HOUSEHOLD PER YEAR

WHS PO Box 32, WENONAH, NJ 08090

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